

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)

Annual Report 2014

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PREFACE

Despite progress in economic, social and cultural rights in 2014, the overall human rights situation in Bangladesh remained grim. Side by side with the enactment of progressive legislation and institution-building efforts, alarming trends by way of ethnic chauvinism, a seriously flawed law enforcement system, and growing infringement on rights to expression continued to be in force, thereby seriously compromising the human rights situation in Bangladesh.

While we welcomed the enactment of the Bangladesh Hill Tracts Development Board Act 2014, the Deoxyribonucleic Act (DNA) 2014, the Journalist Welfare Trust Act 2014, and the Rural Savings Bank Act 2014; we viewed with dismay the return of attacks on minority communities, continued irregularities in law enforcement, and the spectre of growing restraints on the freedom of assembly and the freedom of the media.

The boycotting of elections in 2014 by the main opposition party was accompanied by mass attacks on minority Hindu communities prior to the elections, the reason for this selective targeting of Hindus being attributed to the secular orientations of the ruling party – a plus for the party's chances with Hindu voters at the polls. In all, ASK's Investigation Unit was required to conduct in-depth field inquiries pertaining to five major incidents of attacks on minorities—a demanding task that involved several days of travel to remote areas to witness and record the brutal effects of the looting and destruction of homes, shops and temples.

Notwithstanding the enactment of Deoxyribonucleic Act (DNA) 2014 Act, which makes it easier to prove innocence or guilt in criminal cases, in 2014, as in previous years, extra-judicial killings, abductions, enforced disappearances, the use of excessive force by law enforcement authorities continued to distort the administration of justice and undermine public confidence in law enforcement authorities. The statistics speak for themselves:

Extra-judicial killings, under the labels of “crossfire” and “gunfight”, rose from 72 in 2013 to 128 in 2014.

A total of 88 people were picked up from their homes by people presenting themselves as law enforcement officers and subsequently disappeared. Of these, 12 were subsequently released, and 23 others were found to have died. The fate of the remaining 53 victims still remains unknown.

13 people were found to have died because of torture while in police custody, one individual had committed suicide in jail while 60 others died while incarcerated despite the enactment of the Torture and Custodial (Prevention) Act of 2013.

Perhaps the most shocking misdeed attributed to law enforcement agencies in 2014 was against the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), the country's elite para-military law enforcement agency, which was accused of the abduction and killing of seven individuals in the city of Naryanganj. Among the seven was Nazrul Islam, a member of the Panel of Mayors serving the Narayanganj City

Corporation. The country reeled in shock when the deceased Mayor's father-in-law alleged that the homicides in Narayanganj had been contract killings that had been ordered by a leading member of the ruling party in exchange for Taka six crore¹ (US \$769,231). While the authorities fired three RAB officers, including a commanding officer of Rab-11², ASK strongly feels that a sense of unease will continue to haunt the country unless RAB is thoroughly investigated and reformed.

As ominous as these trends are, equally disturbing are processes and emerging perspectives in the arena of the country's political culture. In 2014, several incidents of attempts to restrain rallies and prevent assemblies took place. In some cases, efforts at prevention took the form of physical attacks. Such moves to place curbs on the rights to assembly and discussion are disturbingly mirrored by the introduction of a National Broadcasting Policy in 2014. This policy, in combination of the previous year's amendment of the Information and Communication Technology Act 2006 (Amendment 2009 and 2013) significantly compromises the freedom of the media.

Given the difficulties and disappointments encountered by human rights actors in 2014, it is with immense gratitude and humility that I acknowledge the untiring commitment of the staff at ASK. Events in 2014 brought the threats to human rights and to human rights defenders very close to ASK as an organization. It was the year when Mohammed Nur Khan, one of our own, suffered an attempted abduction against him in the immediate aftermath of the seven murders in Narayanganj. At the time of this attack on him, Mr. Khan, Director of Investigation and Documentation at ASK, was one of the most vocal in his demand for an end to the pattern of abductions and enforced disappearances witnessed in Narayanganj.

Finally, I humbly thank all my colleagues for their hard work to reach people seeking assistance from ASK. Entire credit for whatever we could achieve goes to them. I also thank the honourable Executive Committee and the general members of ASK for their full cooperation and the support given in the process of our carrying out our duties.

Sultana Kamal
Executive Director

1. Taka 60,000,000.

2. Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad

ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	: Alternative Dispute Resolution	MNS	: Manabadhikar Nari Samaj
BNAD	: Biddaloy Nattya Dol (School Theatre Team)	MAP	: Manabadhikar Ainjibi Parishad
CAT	: Convention Against Torture	MIS	: Management Information System
CBO	: Community Based Organization	MRRU	: Mediation and Rapid Response Unit
CDW	: Child Domestic Worker	NGO	: Non-Governmental Organizations
CEDAW	: Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women	PCU	: Publication and Communication
CHT	: Chittagong Hill Tracts	PIL	: Public Interest Litigation
CO	: Community Organizer	PNGO	: Partner Non-Governmental Organization
CRC	: Convention on the Rights of the Child	PS	: Program Supervisor
DD	: Deputy Director	PP	: Program Proposal
DIC	: Drop-In Centers	PSH	: Psycho-Social Help
EC	: Executive Committee	PME	: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
ED	: Executive Director	RBA	: Rights Based Approach
FGD	: Focus Group Discussion	SOL	: Social Opinion Leader
FIR	: First Information Report	SS&HH	: Support Services and Halfway Home Unit
GD	: General Diary	TA	: Transaction Analysis
GLAF	: Government Legal Aid Fund	TOR	: Terms of Reference
GSJ	: Gender and Social Justice Unit	TOT	: Training of Trainers
GT	: Guide Teacher	UMNP	: Union Manabadhikar Nattya Parishad
HR	: Human Rights	UN	: United Nations
HRAU	: Human Rights Awareness Unit	UP	: Union Parishad
HRDF	: Human Rights Defenders' Forum	UNO	: Upazila Nirbahi Officer
HRV	: Human Rights Violation	UzMNP	: Upazila Level Manabadhikar Nattya Parishad
IBDP	: Issue-based Drama Presentation	VAW	: Violence Against Women
MIA	: Media and International Advocacy Unit	WLUML	: Women Living Under Muslim Laws
MNP	: Manabadhikar Nattya Parishad		
MSP	: Manabadhikar Sangrakkhan Parishad		

GLOSSARY

Fatwa

Arabic for opinion of a person knowledgeable in *Shariah*. In Bangladesh villages, it is decreed by people who have no legal authority; they do not clarify an ambiguous legal situation but weigh up evidence which traditionally was never a function of a *fatwa* giver. Increasingly, *fatwas* are pronounced during *shalish* sessions. Some punitive *fatwas* have been issued against women, who were divorced, for working with NGOs or just working outside the home. Some punishments are inhuman, such as, flogging, stoning and beating etc.

Hilla

Intervening marriage often imposed in cases where the husband--on an impulse--verbally divorces the wife, repents later and wants to take her back. Although practiced in some places, it has no legal foundation in Bangladesh.

PNGOs

ASK has a Dhaka-based office. In order to carry out local activities, e.g. advocacy, training, legal aid etc, it selects like-minded Partner Non Government Organizations at the community level. ASK provides technical support, while these organizations are responsible for arranging project activities. ASK also provides training on family law, human rights, women's rights etc to these organizations' staff and group members/leaders. ASK works with PNGO with the desire to see the organizations growing up as a Human Rights Organization.

Shalish

An informal, traditional system of mediation used to settle marital and land disputes outside the court.

Shalishkar

Mediators who conduct *shalish*. Generally, local elected representatives, school teachers, NGO workers, religious leaders, etc.

ASK AT A GLANCE

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), a national legal aid and human rights organization, was established in 1986. Initially its work was limited to providing free legal services to the disempowered -- particularly women, working children and workers in Dhaka city. However, over the last twenty eight years ASK has developed a more comprehensive approach to the promotion and protection of legal and human rights.

ASK has no political affiliation and adopts a non-partisan approach in defence of human rights. It is a membership based organization founded by nine individuals (4 women and 5 men, 4 deceased). It currently has 27 general members, 17 women and 10 men. A nine member executive committee, currently comprising 7 women and 2 men, meets regularly to decide on policy matters. The general members meet once every year. ASK has consultative status with UNECOSOC.

Status

- Societies Registration Act, 1860 since September 20, 1986
- Foreign Donations Regulation Ordinance, 1978 since June 28, 1993
- NGO Affairs Bureau, 1993
- Special consultative status with UNECOSOC since July 31, 1998

Strategies

ASK's strategies for the promotion and protection of human rights are carried out by 16 programme units and one "component". Units work closely with each other but carry responsibility for specialized functions such as, to name a few, creating human rights (HR) awareness in the public at large, facilitating the development and strengthening the capabilities of organizations in communities for identifying, investigating and protesting HR violations; monitoring law enforcement and legislative processes in the country; liaising with international HR protection organizations, including the UN HR promotion system, to create transparency about the HR situation in Bangladesh; publishing books and articles that help to shape HR perspectives on new issues and problems; and undertaking public interest litigation in the Supreme Court of Bangladesh to protect the HR of citizen and foreigners to equality under the law.

In addition, ASK directly provides legal and mediation services, including rescue and shelter, in cases involving violation of women's rights and child rights; operates several non-formal education centres for working children and street children in Dhaka. . In brief, the activities of ASK are designed with a view to make a comprehensive and sustainable change in the HR situation of Bangladesh and can be classed under the strategies of:

- Awareness raising and strengthening organizational structures in the working areas.
- Capacity building of Human Rights Actors.
- Legal aid and other support services.
- Advocacy and networking.
- Protection of children.
- Institutional development of ASK.

Strategies carried out by different units of ASK and their areas of work are as follows:

STRATEGIES	UNITS
1. Awareness raising and strengthening organizational structures	Human Rights Awareness (HRA) Gender & Social Justice (GSJ)
2. Capacity building of Human Rights Actors	Training (TRU)
3. Legal aid and other support services	Mediation & Rapid Response (MRRU) Litigation Outreach Support Services & Half Way Home (SS&HH) Psycho-social Help Component
4. Advocacy and Networking	Investigation (INV) Documentation (DOC) Publication & Communication Legal Advocacy & Policy Reform (LAPRU) Media and International Advocacy (MIA)
5. Protection of Children	Child Rights (CRU)
6. Institutional Development	Administration (ADMIN) Accounts & Finance (ACFIN) Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (PME)

Partnerships: ASK conducts its programmes outside Dhaka in alliance with 21 key partner NGOs and CBOs (52 Schools and 18 Human Rights Defenders Forums (HRDF). See ASK Support System in Annex II.

CHAPTER ONE

AWARENESS RAISING AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

ASK's vision of a society that is governed by the rule of law, obligates it to promote a culture of peace, based on a fundamental respect for the human rights (HR) of every individual regardless of gender, race, religion, social and economic status. Accordingly, awareness-raising, and raising motivation and skills for peaceful assertion, protest and safeguarding are central to ASK's strategy.

In a sense, every aspect of ASK's work— whether it be a rally or a press conference --potentially contributes to raising awareness and motivation to rise up in defence of HR. However, the organization has specifically set up three units, which are charged with the functions awareness-raising and skills-building (including motivation-raising) for activism. These are the:

- A. Human Rights Awareness Unit (HRA).
- B. Gender and Social Justice Units (GSJ).
- C. Training Unit.

HRA and GSJ have similar goals and work in identical geographical areas but are responsible for two very different groups of population, as a result of which they are forced to respond with very different *tools* and *approaches*. Established in 1998 and 1999, respectively, HRA and GSJ were mandated to work in the same 10 districts. However, while HRA was made responsible for raising HR awareness and activism among school students and young adults (youth) of those districts; GSJ was charged with responsibility for doing so among adults. The age differences among school children and youth, on the one hand, and adults on the other, largely determine how far they can travel on the path to HR activism.

- In the case of school children and young adults, potentials for activism are necessarily limited to persuading peers about human rights through plays student publications, and rallies and festivities to observe landmark events associated with the progress of HR. By comparison, adults are able to take their new-found convictions much further, e.g. by challenging the decisions of *salishes*, opposing bias in the distribution of benefits under social safety net programmes, protesting attacks on minorities etc.
- Another difference, arising from the composition of the target groups of HRA and GSJ, is that it is much easier for HRA to negotiate entry without having to rely on NGOs in the locality. Because it targets school-going children, HRA is able to directly negotiate entry with school administration. It is also subsequently able to use the acceptance and good-will thus gained to prepare the ground for its work with young adults in the same union where a particular school is located. As a result, in 2012, HRA was able to expand its programme to the three new districts of Dhaka, Gazipur and Tangail.

A. HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS (HRA) UNIT

HRA uses the methodology of “action theatre” to sensitize its target groups to human rights and gender equality perspectives, and motivate them to independently promote HR and prevent their abuse. The plays school students and local youth perform are open-ended, i.e., they lack a denouement or conclusion, thereby allowing the audience to discuss the most just resolution to a conflict or the nature of the compensation to be awarded to a victim of a rights violation.

- **Biddalaya Nattya Dals (BNADs)** or school theatre teams: The HRA programme currently operates in 52 secondary schools in 13 districts. The Unit sets up a Biddalaya Nattya Dal (BNAD) or school theatre group in each school. A group comprises 25 to 30 students from classes 7 to 9, and is supervised by a teacher from the school, called a “Guide Teacher”, and a Theatre Activist (TA) from ASK. The themes of the plays run the gamut from the persistence of child marriage, corporeal punishment in schools, to enforced disappearances, extra judicial killings, attacks on minorities, political and election violence etc.
- **Manobadhikar Nattya Parishads (MNPs)** or union-level youth HR theatre teams. The programme also operates 61 voluntary youth (ages 18+) groups in the 13 districts. Known as Manobadhikar Nattya Parishads (MNPs) or HR theatre teams, the youth groups perform issue based dramas regularly in the market and in open places. A Theatre Activist from ASK draws local youth into analyzing current social problems and sensitizes them to legal, HR and gender discrimination issues.



Against the culture of violence. (Sirajganj: MNP)

Inputs from HRA

With the help of ASK's Training Unit, HRA provides three broad areas of training: (a) HR concepts and gender relations analysis, family law and VAW; (b) leadership skills, life skills, and conflict resolution skills; and (c) skills in action theatre production. The Training Unit handles the first category of training while HRA assumes responsibility for the other two. Reinforcement and retention of learning are strongly emphasized as is the growth of a sense of shared cultural identity and camaraderie among group members. An energetic round of competitions, rallies, and festivals help to seal learning and friendships.

Inputs Specific to BNADs. Competitions figure prominently in activities designed for BNADs. Each district sponsors three annual competitions for school children under the umbrella of a Performance Evaluation Competition. The competitions are on (a) general knowledge, knowledge of science and human rights; (b) debating skills; and (c) “cultural” skills or skills in singing, dancing, acting, and poetry recitation.

General knowledge competitions are specifically geared towards assessing school children's knowledge of the history of Bangladesh' Liberation War, its philosophical grounding in notions of secularism and inclusiveness; issues in, and tools for, sustainable living etc. Debating contests



A BNAD prepares for the annual Performance Evaluation Competition

deal with provocative topics such as “does poverty justify child labour?” or “are laws against dowry sufficient to stamp out the practice?” Cultural competitions are designed to enrich and deepen the context within which the next generation is required to conduct its search for identity in an increasingly globalised world that tends to marginalise the values and expressions of societies that have yet to achieve technological competitiveness.

In addition, BNADs take part in an annual wall magazine competition, which now attracts participation from schools external to the HRA programme.



*Finalist's winners of the 2014 National Performance Evaluation Award
At the Seventh National Wall Magazine Festival (Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 2014)*

Inputs more associated with MNPs (Youth). Besides training in HR and action theatre techniques, HRA's main inputs to young adults in rural areas is motivation and ideas for organizing rallies celebrating major national and international HR events and anniversaries. Compared to the competitions intended for school students, the rallies in which youth participate draw larger crowds and have more immediate potential for enthusing whole communities. Among days celebrated in 2014 were International Language Day (21 February), International Women's Day (8th March), National Independence Day (26 March), the Bangla New Year (14 April), the birth centenary of Kobi Sufia Kamal, International Human Rights Day (10th December), and Victory Day (16th December).

PROGRESS IN 2014

In 2014, the HRA unit successfully completed all planned activities in 13 districts and made tentative steps towards incorporating the Dhaka Metropolitan area into its programme. As a consequence, HRA is able to claim that:

- BNADs and MNPs in 13 districts performed plays on HR themes on 989 occasions.

- In all 13 districts BNADs successfully held the Performance Evaluation Competitions on general knowledge and HR knowledge; debating skills; and cultural skills.
- MNPs, in alliance with BNADs, participated in 78 rallies and took responsibility for organizing their specific activities during the events. As in previous years, by involving local people from different occupations, age groups and political orientations, these celebrations helped BNADs and MNPs to consolidate their relationships with local communities, thereby further strengthening a common platform of understandings and shared enthusiasms on which future activism can grow.
- HRA directly provided training to 435 individuals from BNADs, MNPs and Teachers. Of these, the Training Unit accounted for 322 trainees who received training on HR, gender relations analysis, family law and VAW. The remaining 113 were trained in advanced action theatre techniques by staff from HRA.
- In addition, HRA facilitated link-up with an external training programme, which was offered by 26 theatre students from Jahangirnagar University and Rajshahi University. Their course on advanced action theatre was made available to MNP members through 15 union-level workshops in nine districts. Each workshop was attended by 15 to 20 participants, reaching between 225 to 300 MNP members.
- The most important achievement in 2014 was to be able to take stock of the implications of another set of its activities. This is a series of “national” level and “district” level festivals that reach out to the intelligentsia — authors, educators, scholars, journalists, editors, HR lawyers, artists etc. — to raise public interest in the creative and artistic efforts of children and youth.

Seventh National Wall Magazine Festival, which was held in Dhaka from 20-22 March and was attended by over 100 schools, which displayed 200 wall magazines. The magazines featured works by students in the form of poems, stories, articles and plays on HR themes drawn from history, particularly the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

Eighth National HR Theatre Festival, which took place in Dhaka between 27 February and 1 March. It featured productions by 22 theatre groups, of which 13 were MNPs from different districts. This was the highest number, ever, of external troupes to actively engage in the annual event sponsored by ASK. The festival received wide media coverage because of its focus on HR issues and also because it was used to honour three national activists for their outstanding contributions in the field of HR.

District Theatre Festivals in each of the participating districts help build up interest in the National Theatre Festival. Organized by MNPs, these festivals receive wide coverage from the media, which helps to amplify their potentials for raising awareness on a larger scale. In 2014, such district-based festivals were held in nine out of the 13 districts in which HRA operates.

Fourth National Theatre Activists' Conference, held between November 27 and 28, in Pabna. A total of 164 theatre activists from 13 districts participated at the conference along with leading human rights activists. The conference was instituted less than seven years ago and is designed to meet the growing need for coordination among different groups who are interested to see action theatre develop into a national force for positive social change. It has also become a forum for discussing how to distribute responsibility for experimentation and mobilization among troupes, and ways to improve the aesthetic aspects of this form of performance.

The cumulative impact of the festivals in 2014 has been to make HRA more conscious about the potentials and the need for creating a larger social engagement in the development of the youth of Bangladesh. The Unit takes hope from the camaraderie, the sense of participating in something significant that has developed among the local teachers, journalists, lawyers, and retired professionals who have been repeatedly invited to the performances and competitions of BNADs and MNPs.



Rally: Eighth National HR Theatre Festival, 27 Feb-1 Mar, 2014, Dhaka)



Eighth National HR Theatre Festival, 27 Feb-1 Mar, 2014, Dhaka)

HRA's focus on this group as a support system for children and youth is not accidental. The reason for their selection has been that, in terms of values, they embody an adjustment to a fast changing technological and cultural world that holds promise of being able to preserve the most sensible of the old while allowing for the embracing of the most positive in the new. While the globalization of culture and the entertainment industry in Bangladesh, made possible by enormous technological developments, increasingly drive the young towards a culture of individual success, growing consumerism, and instant gratification, the guests HRA relies on to serve as social models, argue for an alternative paradigm. This paradigm, rooted in notions of sharing, moderation, postponement of immediate gratification, and greater concern for others holds greater promise for the possible emergence of a culture of non-violence that is so essential to ensuring environmental sustainability, social justice, and economic justice today.

Fortunately for HRA, the example, loyalty and enthusiasm that characterize the “regular guests” it invites to events associated with the BNADs and MNPs now prompt others like them to step forward and work alongside the MNPs.

- In Naogaon, Joypurhat, Koshoreganj, Kushtia and Sirajganj, e.g., other cultural groups are now eager to associate themselves with the MNPs and propose joint shows. Retired teachers, lawyers and journalists volunteer help without being asked. Such help ranges from small fund-raising (for local transport, snacks, low-cost stage props), to liaising with administration for clearance and permits, to assistance to individual members of MNPs facing an emergency. Recently, when some members of the MNP in Sirajganj were picked up by the police on a false charge, a journalist took the initiative to get them freed.
- Equally important, is the sense of identity that has begun to be evident among former members of MNPs who have moved on in life. In Dhaka, e.g., a number of such individuals have come together to form the Dhaka Mahanagar Nattaya Parishad, a theatre group dedicated to themes of peace, non-violence and the dignity of all regardless of gender, economic status, ethnicity or creed.

Challenges and Solutions

- (1) The usual challenges posed by social conservatism continue unabated. A selection of people, including a handful of teachers, persist in opposing acting, singing, and dancing as trivial, socially unproductive and, therefore, “immoral”. In particular, youth theatre productions, which are staged outdoors with the participation of both women and men, come under attack.

In some places conservatism has become stronger and groups of women can be seen travelling in groups to persuade young adults and their families against continuing their involvement in action theatre. The best strategy for overcoming this form of resistance is a more energetic tempo, a greater number of activities. It is also important to use study circles, wall magazines, debates and quiz competitions as opportunities for highlighting the secular basis of the Bangladesh Liberation War, and the secular values of major freedom fighters, scholars, writers and poets of the country. Another strategy pursued by HRA is to give more attention to inviting guests, who provide positive role models, to the public events and celebrations it sponsors.

- (2) A more trying challenge for HRA in 2014 has been negotiating entry into schools in Dhaka District, especially the Dhaka Metropolitan area. The programme utilizes after-school hours but children and their families in Dhaka city find it extremely difficult to squeeze out time once the school day ends. The new fad for private tutoring after school hours, the lack of security, and heavy traffic congestion leave parents and children with little time to spare once classes end.



Where private coaching prevails, real education takes flight.

Parents find themselves having to rush children off from school to private tutors, where they wait around until it is time to again escort their children --- this time back home.

How the problem in Dhaka city is to be resolved remains to be seen. However, a possible insight is provided by recent experiences in the districts where pressures created by the vogue for “coaching” have only recently begun to be felt. This has led BNADs and MNPs outside Dhaka to critically reflect on the effects of the fad for private coaching. One stream of thought focuses on the tendency of private coaching to de-motivate teachers from rendering their best in the classroom so as to create demand for their services outside school hours. Another explores the possibilities that gaps between children from poorer and wealthier households will increase because the former are not able to afford private tutors.

Meantime, the HRA Unit copes by engaging in a continuous dialogue with parents and school authorities about the need for active learning; the value of play, exploration and discovery; and the need to evolve towards a nation based on social and economic justice. As a result and against all odds, HRA has succeeded in receiving initial letters of interest in its programmes from four secondary schools in Dhaka City. The schools are: Saint Joseph Higher Secondary School in Mohammedpur; Rayer Bazar High School and Ali Hossain Girls School, both in Rayer Bazar; and Lalmatia Girls School, in the Lalmatia area.

- (3) A final challenge has more to do with the youth groups or MNPs. Compared to school theatre groups, MNPs are much more dependent on their members for leadership. However, the attrition of seasoned members, whose interests and commitments change as they find employment or get married, poses a problem. HRA responds to the frequent attrition of front-line members of MNPs by intensifying training so as to create third and fourth line leaders who can pick up the baton.

B. THE GENDER AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (GSJ) UNIT

The Gender and Social Justice (GSJ) Unit seeks to ensure the accountability of public institution by promoting community activism. It creates HR awareness among members of the community, and local elected representatives and encourages the development of organization in civil society. It catalyses and strengthens community-based, voluntary groups ---Manobadhikar Songrokkhan Porishads (MSPs) or HR protection associations; Manobadhikar Nari Samaj (MNSs) or all-women HR protection organizations; and Manobadhikar Ainjibi Porishads (MAPs), HR lawyersgroups. The Unit establishes critical linkages between community groups, lawyers, government officials, elected representatives and the media. GSJ's programme is implemented with logistic support from local "partner" NGOs (PNGOs) and operates in 10 upazillas belonging to 10 districts.

Members of the MNSs and MSPs monitor incidents of rights violations within the family, the home and in the public arena, and lobby for remedial action by relevant authorities. Examples of the former are domestic violence, polygamy, failure to provide for the support of children and wife³, *fatwas*, child marriage and the like. Examples of rights violations in the public arena are corruption in school administration, hospital management, and social safety net systems. Distortions in local systems for administering justice, especially in mediation (*salish*), is itself a key issue. This the GSJ programme tackles by encouraging members of MNSs and MSPs to take part in local *salish* bodies, and training them in the rules and procedures for conducting *salish* in conformance to national laws and notions of fairness. The task necessarily entails strengthening the capabilities of Partner NGOs (PNGOs) to understand HR concepts, and a variety of laws. Because the most common source of legal and HR deprivation in the rural areas is uneven gender relations, training in laws pertaining to the family, domestic violence, VAW is of special importance.

While many disputes in rural areas can be referred to mediation, criminal cases involving rape or abduction can only be settled through courts. In preparation for such eventualities, the GSJ programme provides link-up with Manobadhikar Ainjibi Parishads (MAPs) or Human Rights Lawyers Panels. Lawyers are provided training in HR concepts, and motivated to respond to the legal needs of the rural poor. Familiarization with the availability of Government Legal Aid Funds and mechanisms for accessing them for low-income clients is also an important part of the training.

PROGRESS IN 2014

In the last annual report, it was observed that the MSPs, MNSs, MAPs, and Human Rights Forums, associated with the GSJ unit, had matured significantly, with the result that they had begun to make the transition from being concerned with mainly domestic disputes (divorce, abandonment etc.) and local issues (conflicts over land) to less familiar issues affecting larger geographical areas and larger collectives beyond the immediate community. Examples of the new generation of HR concerns that now occupy CBOs, associated with the GSJ programme, include ensuring corruption-free social safety net distribution systems, honest hospital and school administration systems, citizens' rights to information from the government, HR trends in a district as a whole. The expansion in interest has been accompanied by another kind of change –away from working in small teams concentrated in the same locality, to working in larger and anonymous teams.

3. Among Muslims, support for the wife applies in cases of desertion only. Divorced women are entitled only to the dower (*kabin*) promised at time of marriage.

In 2014, the GSJ Programme followed a two-pronged effort to simultaneously:

Re-energize and deepen grass-roots community engagement in HR promotion at the levels of village, union, and *thana*.

Bolster the capabilities of CBOs at the higher-- district-- level for working effectively in bigger teams on HR issues affecting larger areas, and employing more abstract tools for HR promotion. This entails focusing on improving the skills of MSPs (the mixed gender CBOs) and MAPs (panels of HR lawyers) for, on the one hand, coordination and consensus-building; and HR-related research, publication, advocacy and lobbying, on the other.

Re-Energizing Local Community Engagement

This entails focusing on MNPs or the all-women CBO, boosting their morale through opportunities to renew contact, and providing them advanced training in gender analysis and new strategies for demanding accountability from local government

- The Unit sponsored large district-based gatherings among women CBOs. A total of 10 such gatherings took place, one in each district where GSJ operates. Members of the MNSs report that these gatherings have helped to consolidate social relationships and work linkages among themselves. GSJ itself observes that there has been a significant increase in contact and exchange between women across villages, unions, and wards. The mobile phone helps but so do greater willingness to travel. Consequently, there has been a tangible increase in morale as well as the level of activism among members of the MNSs.
- GSJ organized an intensive, 3-day training workshop on CEDAW for MNS members. The workshop was repeated in each of the 10 districts and was designed to deepen women's understandings of the government's international obligations under CEDAW, specific government agencies and institutions responsible for implementing and monitoring conformance to CEDAW, and how to use the provisions of CEDAW to demand remedial action where women's rights are denied or violated.



Training workshop for MNS on applying CEDAW to demand women's rights. (Mymensingh, 2014).

- Despite progress, mediation or *salish* continues to be a male dominated activity, with the result that decisions tend to be heavily biased against women. In an effort to increase women's interest in participating in *salishes* and contributing to the improvement of the institution, GSJ organized 20 workshops, two per district, on the do's and don'ts of a model *salish*. The day-long workshops focused on laws governing mediation⁴, typical situations where women's rights are likely to be compromised, and how women *salishkars* can play a more assertive role in the outcome of a *salish*. The workshops also went on to spotlight how women's entry into the role of *salishkar* can be turned into a stepping stone for urging them to widen their participation in public life by, e.g., running for office in Union Parishads elections.
- GSJ also took a significant step to improve local responses to the all-women CBOs. In their efforts to demand better services for women and children from local government, the MNSs have to work closely with two standing committees associated with Union Parishads. The committees are the Women and Children Standing Committee, and the Law and Order Standing Committee. For all purposes, though, these standing committees exist on paper only, with the result that their usefulness as entry points for engaging Union Parishads are extremely limited. To breathe life into two standing committees, the MNSs organized 38 workshops for Union Parishads in all 10 districts. The purpose of the workshops was to highlight the importance of keeping informed about development programmes offering benefits to children, women and other vulnerable groups; being familiar with formal procedures for accessing entitlements for their constituencies, and maintaining energy to facilitate delivery, and to share ideas about how the two subcommittees and civil society can best work together to increase local access to development programmes. The workshops generated considerable enthusiasm among many members of the two standing committees.



A MNS workshop on do's and don'ts of a *Salish*, Kishoreganj

4. Complaints involving criminal offences (e.g., rape) cannot be mediated. Issuing *fatwas* is *illegal*, as requiring a *hilla* (intermediate) marriage of a woman wishing to remarry an ex-spouse.

Bolstering the Capabilities CBOs for District Level Activism

In 2014, GSJ intensified its focus on strengthening the capabilities of CBOs for working together in larger teams. This was achieved through organizing numerous opportunities for working in teams and explicitly articulating the need for skills-building in tolerating dissent, welcoming competition, and building consensus.

Organizing Opportunities for Team Work

- In 2014, a majority of ASK-affiliated CBOs *within* each of the 10 districts held coordination meetings among themselves. The list of such CBOs includes the MNSs, MSPs, MAPs, and Human Rights Forums affiliated with the GSJ unit; and BNADs and MNPs that are associated with the HRA Unit. This coordination meeting has become an annual event and proves helpful in ensuring that their respective activities are not in conflict and that the CBOs are able to lend their numbers to each other at community events such as rallies, plays, cultural celebrations, etc.
- On 29th April 2014, MSPs from *across* all 10 districts met to coordinate their activities for the year. The meeting was designed to make it easier for CBOs to schedule joint training sessions, stagger requests for field visits from GSJ's Dhaka-based staff, share information about new resources that CBOs can share among themselves etc.
- The meeting of 29 April was followed up by a 2-day training workshop, facilitated by GSJ, on dispute resolution and consensus building.
- The Annual Conference of the Central Committee of MSPs was held between 11-14 December outside the town of Jessore. It was attended by 60 representative from the MSPs; 40 of whom were men and 20, women. The main focus of the conference was ensuring a fair and congenial election of a new MSP Central Committee. The election was scheduled to take place immediately after the conference.

GSJ framed the conference within a conscious attempt to raise awareness about the inevitability of conflict in opinions and ambitions in a democratic process, and create appreciation for the gains to be made when an organization is able to source a larger variety of perspectives and a wider range of leadership skills from among its members. The results of the election, which followed immediately after the conference, were well-received, with outgoing members of the old committee welcoming their replacements with promises of help whenever needed. Of the 31 members of the new MSP Central Committee, 11 are women.

Developing Command over New HR Promotion Tools

Key among new tools offered to CBOs are publishing annual HR situation analyses for each of the 10 districts, and publishing a book for sharing experiences in HR activism.

These two activities alone succeed in generating a host of activities that keep CBOs busy for large parts of the year –planning, research and analysis, publicity, dissemination, advocacy, and liaising with policy- and decision-makers. For example:

- CBOs in each district formally launched district-based Human Rights Report for year 2013. As in the previous year the launching of these reports, in the *sadar upazilla*, took place midst considerable attention from the media and accolades from government officials; elected representatives; members of the local intelligentsia, leaders from the professions of teaching, law, and medicine; political and social leaders. The participation of senior officials from district administration and law enforcement, as speakers and commentators, contributed significantly to the credibility of the reports and their effectiveness for purposes of advocacy.



CBOs have progressed towards large-scale HR Monitoring and Reporting

- In anticipation of the next round of HR Report (covering trends in 2014), a series of planning meetings were held in each of the 10 districts. CBOs met at the meetings to select topics, decide on data requirements and formats, distribute tasks among themselves, and set timelines. Feedback and criticism about previous HR reports proved useful to making decisions.
- To allow for a cross-fertilization of ideas between districts, GSJ followed up by arranging an all-district final meeting for planning annual reports. The meeting was held in Dhaka.
- The book of reflections and poems, which CBOs associated with GSJ have been publishing annually since 2011, was launched at the large conference of CBOs held between 11-14 December 2014). Entitled *Ananda, Alochona, Nirbachan –Lokhyo Moder Shonggothhon*⁵, the book anticipates the possible fall-out from forthcoming elections for office bearers within CBOs. The articles and poems explore the need to balance competitiveness with concern for strengthening the unity, coherence and effectiveness of one's organization.

The publication is also significant as a demonstration of the development of women as HR actors. Out of 4 articles on HR, 3 are written by women; 21 out of 46 accounts of personal experiences in HR work are by women; out of two 2 short stories of fiction, 1 is by a woman. Again, the book contains interviews of 4 HR activists who are held up as models. Of these interviewees, 2 are women.

What is also impressive about the contributions by women is that they are not limited to providing personal or anecdotal information. Rather, women are equally adept as men at using statistical data from large surveys to support their arguments. Equally significant is that the women evince a strong awareness of gender disparities as being the outcome of large social systems that women themselves help to sustain.

5. Roughly translates as *Engagement, Dialogue, and Elections –their Place in Strengthening Our Organization*.



MSPs, MNSSs, MAPs, MNPs, BNADs, & HR Forums in Gaibandha discuss HR Situation with ASK Executive Director (back to camera)

Challenges Faced and Counter Measures

Extremely hot weather conditions in April, May and June made it difficult to complete scheduled work for that quarter. GSJ coped by shifting the work to the next quarter and dealing with the resulting pressures between July through September as best as it could.

However, pervasive corruption and low appreciation for the law pose a greater problem. Members of MSPs and MNSSs, engaged as *shaliskars* or providing access to legal assistance, are frustrated when offenders are able to find shelter from powerful people in the community. Many members of the MSPs and MNSSs, having successfully contested local elections, now serve on Union Parishads. However, their efforts to intervene on the side of justice are often frustrated. The CBOs, assisted by ASK and PNGOs, respond to the challenge by organizing meetings and workshops to openly discuss issues of corruption and nepotism with Chairpersons and members of the Union Parishads. However, given how entrenched corruption and nepotism are in society, it is clear that such overt discussion will be needed for many years to come.

C. TRAINING UNIT

ASK's Training Unit is markedly different from the typical model of a training department found in most establishments. The Unit not only serves the standard function of providing programme support to its parent organization but goes beyond to develop capacity for articulating HR knowledge and protecting HR in a broad spectrum of individuals and associations external to its host body. On average, the Unit offers training to 1,500 people a year, and covers 21 districts in Bangladesh.

Trainees served by the Training Unit fall into three broad categories:

ASK Staff

The Unit is critical to integrating new staff into the goals, vision, work culture and work processes of ASK through training and also offers training to a large group of programme participants who either use of services offered by ASK, or co-manage, or help to operationalize its programmes.

ASK Programme Participants

This group is by far the largest group to receive training from the Unit and comprises

- *Users of ASK's free legal aid services.* Includes women awaiting mediation or litigation; survivors of domestic violence or VAW, trafficking, and enforced captivity; women and children from ASK's Half-Way Home and/or receive counselling from ASK's Counselling Unit. This group receives



Training to MNS members: Using the Right to Information Act to monitor Social Safety Net systems.



Training workshop to a BNAD on HR, Gender & Legal Issues

training in HR, gender relations analysis and relevant laws. Such training is critical to the recovery of victims and survivors because it helps to place their *personal* experience and *acceptance* of abuse in the larger *social* context of the inevitable consequences of unequal social relationships, whether obtaining between man and woman, or adult and child, or majority Bangladeshi and minority Bangladeshi etc. In so doing, training in gender relations analysis makes it possible for the survivor to forgive herself and move on as an “equal” among “equals”.

- *The staff of Partner NGOs (PNGOs)* that co-manage ASK programmes, i.e., PNGOs that interface with the GSJ Unit, Outreach and MRRU, and assist them to mobilize, coordinate and guide the activities of local CBOs.
- *Members of CBOs* who participate in, and assume responsibility for the activities proposed by ASK programmes, i.e., members of BNAD, MNP, MNS, MSP, “group members” associated with Outreach.

External Agencies

Finally, the Unit serves as an expert training institute, which customizes training courses on a fee-for-service basis. It is credited with being especially strong in providing training on HR, gender relations analysis, family law, laws pertaining to violence and VAW, advocacy and networking, and HR campaign planning and management. A list of external agencies that have commissioned training from the Unit in the past appears in the following table:

List of External Agencies Requesting Training From ASK 1994-present

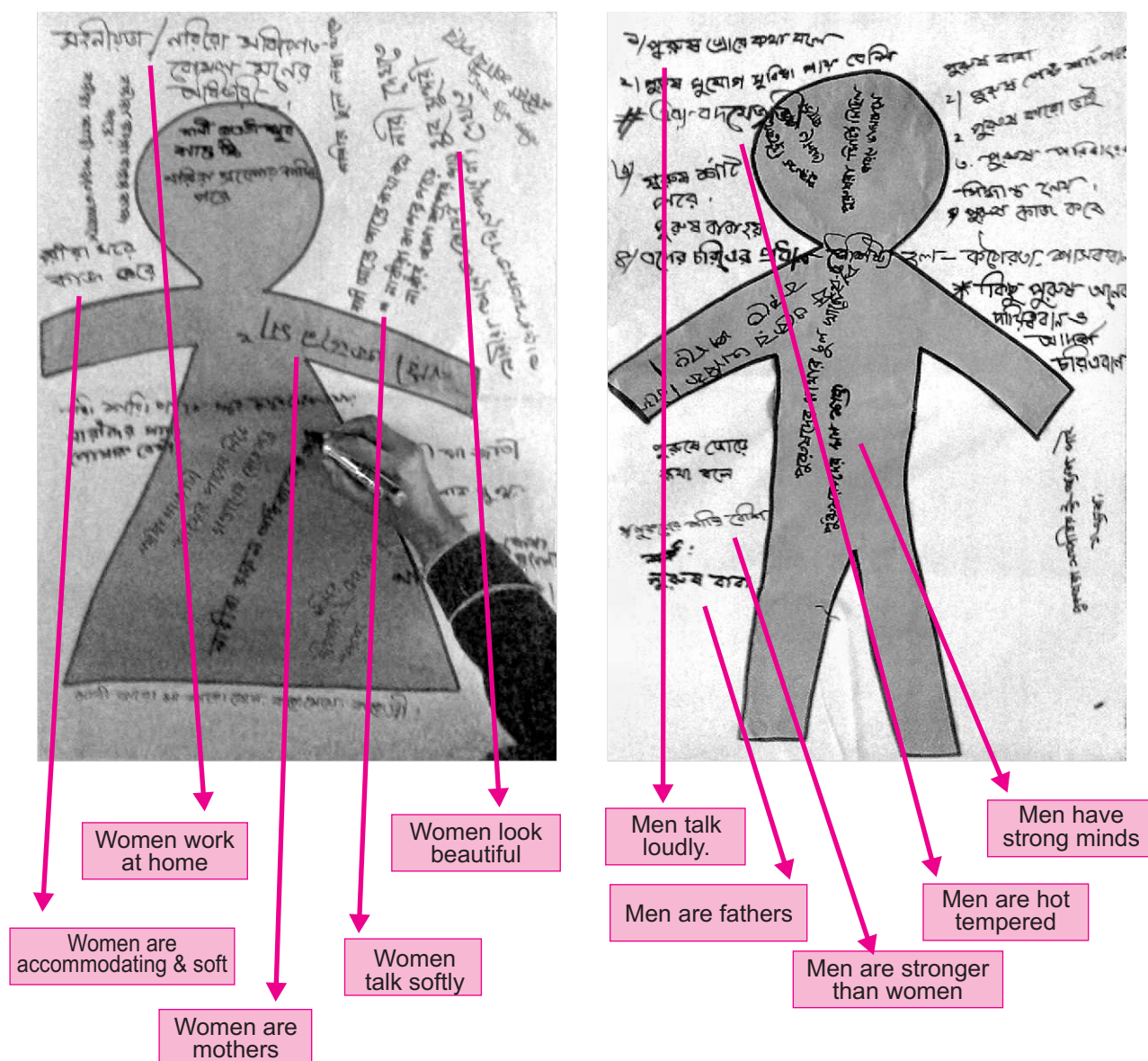
- Anirban Samaj Unnayan Songstha, Potuakhali
- Bandhu Social Welfare Society
- Bangladesh Legal Aid
- BLAST: Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust
- BRAC
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- CARE Bangladesh
- Centre for Disability in Development (CDD)
- Church of Bangladesh Social Development program (CBSDP)
- CONCERN Worldwide Bangladesh
- Department of Women & Gender Studies (DWGS), DU
- Friendship, Gaibandha
- German Technical Cooperation (GTZ)
- GKT
- Gono Kalayan Trust (GKT), Manikgonj
- IDEAL
- Initiative for Rights View (IRV)
- Mukto Akash Bangladesh (MAB)
- Naripokkho
- NETZ Bangladesh
- Nijera Kori
- Peoples Oriented Program Implementation (POPI)
- PLD India
- RDRS
- Research Initiatives Bangladesh (RIB)
- SEEP
- Sight saver,
- SUPOTH, Nilphamari
- SWALLOWS Bangladesh
- Terre des hommes Italia (TDH-Italy)
- The Leprosy Mission Bangladesh (TLMB)
- UNDP
- USC Canada - Bangladesh (USCC-B)
- Zabarang, Khagrachari

Methodology

The Training Unit pays close attention to issues of quality.

- It annually reviews existing modules for purposes of updating, and also develops new modules as needed. Of concern in reviews is the need to revise content to keep pace with socio-economic change, presentation methods, and materials.
- The Unit stresses highly participatory training methods, and relies on demonstration, role play, group work, debate, study circles, field visits and practice sessions to reinforce concepts.

The Gender Divide



Perceptions of Trainees

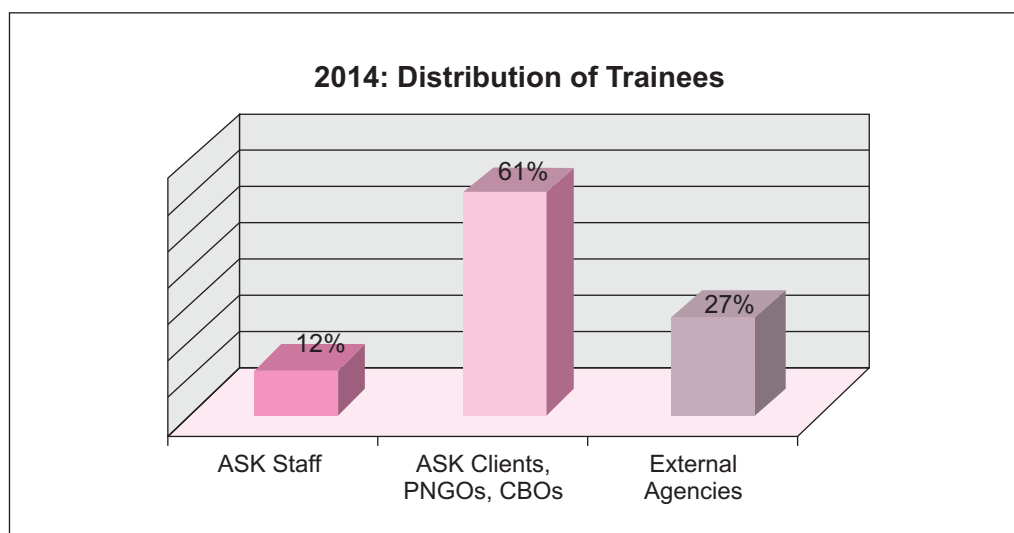
Workshop on Human Rights, Gender and Legal Issues, 2014.

- Finally, it consciously monitors its performance through feedback from trainees. The Unit prefers to elicit feedback through standardized schedules that ask respondents to rate performance along eight dimensions. The dimensions are: subject matter mastery, presentation skills, training methodology, creativity, quality of training materials, encouragement of participation, logistics management. However, it is not always possible to use the standardized evaluation instruments and it becomes necessary to adapt such tools to respond to special circumstances and needs of, e.g., people lacking literacy or visually or otherwise constrained.

Progress

In 2014, the Unit organized and conducted a total 65 training courses for 1576 participants; 57 percent of whom were women and 43 percent, men.

- As is normal, ASK staff comprised only around 10 percent of trainees. The largest group of participants (61 percent) were accounted for by users (hereafter “survivors”) of ASK's free legal aid service, the staff of PNGOs and members of CBOs associated with ASK programmes.

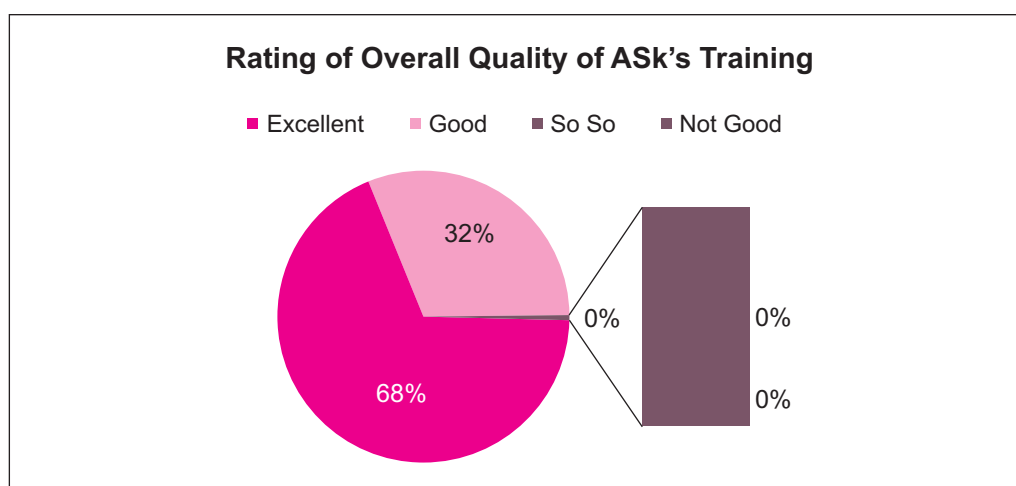
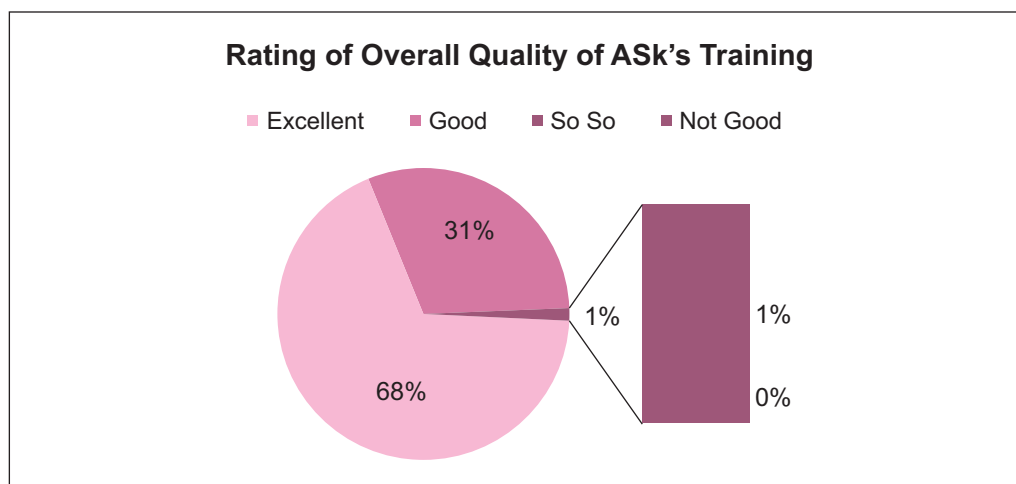


The preponderance of survivors, PNGOs and CBOs attests to the important role the Training Unit plays in determining the success of ASK's programmes, whether implemented in solo or in partnership with other NGOs.

The second largest group of trainees in 2014 were from external organizations, i.e., government departments, NGOs, teaching institutions and hospitals etc., requesting customized training from ASK. In 2014, this group included trainees from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs BRAC (Legal Services Programme), the Centre for Disability and Development, Durjoy Nari Shangstha (supported by CARE-Bangladesh), NETZ-Germany and Sight Savers.

- The rating of the quality of training by ASK is uniformly high. For example, in 2014, it was possible to apply the standardized evaluation instrument in the case of participants from eight workshops, which were attended by members of BRAC and the Family of Children⁶. The overwhelming majority of the participants –almost 70 percent—rated the *overall quality* of ASK's training as “Excellent” while all but 1 percent rated it as being “Good”.
- Similarly, Nearly 70 percent of the same participants rated the Training Unit's command over subject matter as “excellent” while the balance said this expertise was “good”.

6. Workshops for BRAC were on HR and gender relations analysis. They were offered in Uttara (Dhaka), June 2014; Bogra, September 2014; Comilla, December 2014; Faridpur, October 2014; Dinajpur, August 2014; Jessore, and November 2014. Workshop for Family of Children was on Family Law, and was held in Uttara (Dhaka) on March 24.



Challenges Faced and Solutions

A workshop on the HR of people with disabilities, which was commissioned by the Centre for Disability in Development confronted ASK with a new challenge in 2014. Some of the trainees were visually impaired; others physically unable to handle the movements and exercises common to training. Consequently, it made it difficult to use regular reading materials, tools & training techniques.

- Trainers resolved the problem by consulting and exchanging ideas with the requesting NGO. This was followed up with discussions with self-help groups among the physically challenged. The burden of the discussions was their feedback regarding techniques and reading materials. Based on the exchanges, a team was assigned to adapt materials, tools and techniques for the training workshop. One adaptation that proved very useful for the sight impaired was to record reading materials in audio form.

In 2014, as in other years, many venues were inadequate in terms of size, spatial arrangements, lighting, and furniture for sitting and storing handouts and supplies. Also, lack of proper equipment for using AV aids was another drawback.

- Trainers dealt with some of the problems by moving activities, like small group work, into gardens and yards outdoors.

CHAPTER TWO

LEGAL AID AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

Much of ASK's work today takes place in solemn conference rooms and remote consultation halls, where the need to change national laws in order to bring them into line with international HR instruments, ways to monitor compliance with international treaties are debated. However, ASK, which began as a legal aid service for the poor, still insists on remaining firmly rooted in the lives of women, children, the poor, and minorities living in the margins of social and economic life. According to the organization, without an anchor in the everyday challenges faced by the disenfranchised, a HR organization loses its capacity to intuit and effectively respond to the full meaning of “human rights”. It is therefore no surprise that free legal aid accounts for one of the larger programmes in ASK.

ASK's Legal Aid and Supportive Services (hereafter simply “legal aid programme” or “the programme”) provides a complex of services, which are provided through four units in one component: Mediation and Rapid Response (MRRU), Litigation (LITI), Outreach, Support Service & Half Way Home, and the Psychosocial Counseling Component (PSC). The programme employs some 52 staff, including lawyers, field workers, management personnel, support staff, psychosocial counselors etc. In addition, the programme is assisted by a panel of external lawyers.

MRRU, LITI and Outreach Units

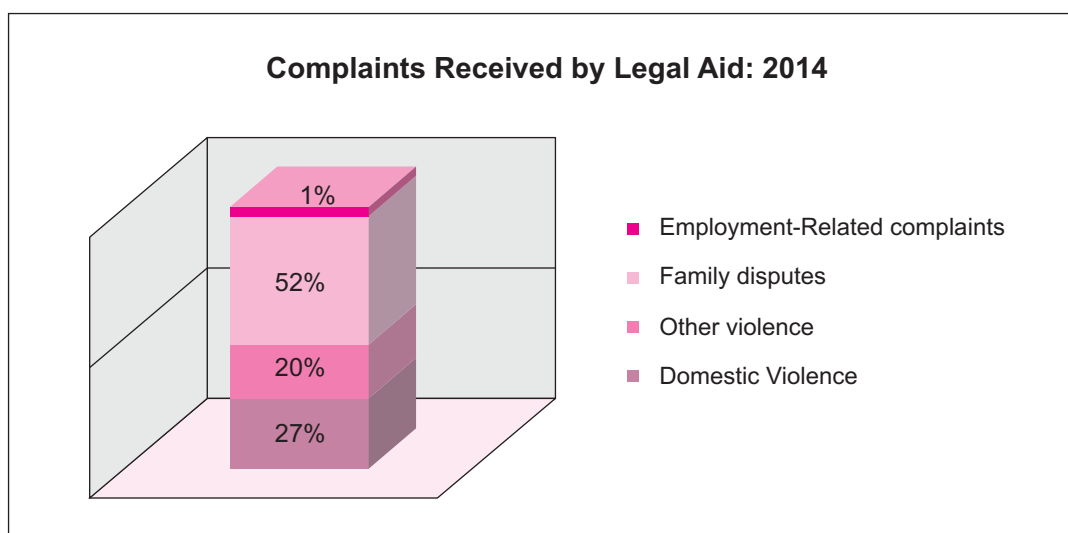
Mediation and litigation in courts are the main forms of resolving legal disputes in Bangladesh. In Dhaka District, ASK separates mediation and litigation and houses them in two different units: the Mediation and Rapid Response Unit (MRRU) and the Litigation Unit (LITU). Outside Dhaka, mediation and litigation co-exist under a single roof---that of the Outreach Unit, which ASK co-manages with PNGOs in a total of seven districts⁷.

Between them, the three units handle complaints that are mainly faced by women and, which arise primarily from gender disparities within the family and domestic relations. 80 percent of complaints handled by legal aid have to do with family disputes (abandonment by the husband, divorce, child custody, maintenance for the wife and children) or with domestic violence. Another 20 percent of complaints have to do with more general forms of violence that, however, are more often associated with women ---rape, attempted raped, dowry violence (being set on fire, beating, murder), child abduction by the non-custodial parent, forceful confinement by employers (house maids), pornography, sexual harassment, stalking. Outreach is compelled to shoulder

7. The districts of Barisal, Bogra, Chittagong, Hobigonj, Rajshahi, Shatkhira, and Tangail.

responsibility for protecting against a more invidious form of violence ---attacks on minorities, which are more pervasive in the rural and more isolated areas.

A very small proportion of Legal aid's caseload has to do with employment-related issues such as non- payment of wages and benefits.



Cases involving offences that can be construed as criminal under the law can only be dealt with through litigation. The vast majority of family-related disputes, which mostly involve women as the complainant, are dealt with through mediation. This is partly because mediation is a more familiar form of dispute resolution in the country, and partly because mediation is perceived to afford women more privacy. However, equally compelling is the influence of cultural norms that stigmatize women who assert their rights as being overly self-centred, aggressive and lacking social grace.

PROGRESS IN 2014

MRRU, LITI and Outreach make a distinction between three types of service.

A. Dispute resolution services through mediation or litigation.

B. Rapid action assistance (referrals to more appropriate agencies, writing out formal letters of complaint to be used to lodge a grievance with the police, rescuing children abducted by a non-custodial parent, rescuing domestic help forcefully confined by employers, negotiating shelter or medical treatment for survivors by liaising with government facilities, the police, hospitals, charitable organizations etc.

C. Support services. This group of services covers temporary shelter (up to six months) through a Halfway Home maintained by ASK for women and children. Residents receive food, medical care, clothing, opportunities for excursions, psycho-social counseling and vocational training for individual.

A. Mediation and Litigation

In 2014, the MRRU, LITI and Outreach Units managed:

- A combined case load of 4,033 complaints of which 45 percent were new (registered in 2014), and the remainder, rolled over from previous years.

- Mediated 702 complaints. Of these, close to 70 percent were successfully resolved in 2014. On average, each salish required two sessions.
- Filed 208 new cases in courts.
- Of the 1092 total pending cases in courts, ASK disposed of 244 cases (22 percent) by year end. The majority (nearly 80 percent) of the disposed cases were older and had been filed prior to 2014.
- Between them, MRRU, LITI and Outreach recovered a total of Taka 11,865,487⁸ in compensation for 224 survivors, making an average of Taka 52,971 in compensation per person.

B. Assistance through Rapid Response

In addition to the above, in 2014, ASK dealt with another 3,266 survivors by providing either “legal advice”, i.e., quick referrals to more appropriate agencies and services, or “rapid response” services. Of these:

- 2,648 survivors were assisted through referrals
- While 645 survivors receive assistance through “rapid response”.
 - A great many of these cases involved writing up GD's and FIR's⁹ for survivors to file complaints with the police.
 - Others involved more complex effort, and consisted in rescuing children from illegal custody, rescuing domestic workers forcefully confined by employers, negotiating shelter from government and non-government agencies for travellers and the indigent, liaising with police and hospitals to secure free medical treatment for people in distress.



A Survivor of Trafficking Returns Home

8. Taka 1 crore, eighteen lakh, four hundred and eighty seven

9. A complaint to the police can be made either through a “GD” (General Diary) or “FIR” (First Information Report).

**Table: Legal Aid Programme Part I:
MRRU, LITI and Outreach Units by Number of Survivors Served**

Mediation & Litigation						
	MRRU	LITI	Outreach	Half-Way Home	Psycho-Social Component	Total
Mediation & Litigation						4,033
• New (2014)	1,142	NA	681	-	-	1,823
• Old (Rolled over from previous years)	2,085	839	125	-	-	2,210
Number of mediations conducted	421	NA	281	-	-	702
Number of total sessions	726	NA	743	-	-	1,469
Number of complaints resolved	195	NA	281	-	-	476
• New	156	NA	246	-	-	402
• Old	39	NA	35	-	-	74
No. of cases registered for litigation						1138
Number of new cases filed	NA	208	56	-	-	264
Old cases pending in court (up to Dec. 31, 2014)	NA	839	32	-	-	874
Total cases disposed:		244	24			
• New	NA	28	7	-	-	268
• Old	NA	216	17	-	-	35
				-	-	233
Money Recovered (in Taka)	6,409,220	1,560,000	3,896,267	-	-	11,865,487
• No. of survivors	179	1	44	-	-	224
• Av. award per client (in Taka)	35,806	1,560,000	88,552	-	-	52,971
Rapid Action for Survivors:						3,266
Survivors receiving “legal advice” (referrals to elsewhere)	2,075	194	379	-	-	2,648
Survivors receiving “other” rapid action.	562		83	-	-	645

Support Services

Support services in ASK's legal aid programme covers the Half-Way Home and the Psycho-Social Component.

Half-Way Home (HWH)

PROGRESS

The Half-Way Home in 2014:

- Supplied housing, food, and medical treatment to 90 individuals, of which 68 were women and 22, children.
- Provided counselling support, through a part-time psycho-social counsellor who is on staff at HWH. 68 survivors received a total of 154 sessions, of which 126 were individual sessions; and 28, group sessions.
- Also coordinated additional counselling support for survivors from PSC.
- Created access to a total of 18 workshops, all designed to empower survivors. They include:
 - Workshops on psycho-social development issues, critical to developing positive self-definitions and self-confidence:
 - 12 half-day workshops, facilitated by the HWH staff counsellor, on psycho-social concepts derived from Transaction Analysis (TA).
 - One 3-day workshop, on TA, which was led by PSC.
 - Workshops on gender relations and gendered laws, important to perceiving the social sources of one's powerlessness and lack of capability.
 - One 3-day workshop, facilitated by ASK's Training Unit, on gender relations analysis.
 - One 3-day workshop on family law and inheritance laws.
 - Vocational training workshops vital to women acquiring marketable economic skills.
 - Three 25-day workshops on tailoring, producing handicrafts and accessories from jute, and tie-dye and batik techniques.

Table Legal Aid Programme (Part II)
Half-Way Home, Psycho-Social Component

	MRRU	LITI	Outreach	Half-Way Home	Psycho-Social Component	Total
No of survivors						
Provided Shelter (including food, medical treatment, psycho-soc counselling, recreational outings.	-	-	-	90		90
• Women	-	-	-	68		
• Children	-	-	-	22		
Provided Counseling (by HWH counselors & PSC counselors)	-	-	-	68	331	
• HWH staff counsellor. 154 sessions to 68 survivors, of which 126 individual & 28 group sessions)						
• PSC counsellors. Each client received 5 to 7 seven counselling sessions (individually or in groups)						
Provided Training						
No. of survivors attending 12 half-day workshops on Transaction Analysis by staff counsellor of HWH.	-	-	-	68		
No. of survivors attending 6 training workshops run by other units & trainers.	-	-	-	71		71
a. 3-day gender relations analysis. (via ASK Training Unit).	-	-	-	11		
b. 3- day HR training (via ASK Training Unit).	-	-	-	16		
c. day self-awareness & self development (via Psycho-Social Component)*.	-	-	-	12		
d. 25-day accessories production from jute*.	-	-	-	10		
e. 25 day tie-dye and wax batik*.	-	-	-	10		
f. 25-day tailoring*.	-	-	-	12		
Total workshop participants	-	-	-	210		139

* The Half-Way Home commissions professional trainers to deliver the vocational training. On average, vocational training workshops run 25 days.

What is “Rapid Response”?

In 2014, Legal Aid dealt with 3,293 survivors by responding, not with mediation or litigation, but “Rapid Response”. Of these, 80 percent involved referring individuals to other agencies – a form of Rapid Response that is easily accomplished, and involves little time or effort. However the remaining 645 instances of “Rapid Response” in 2014 were much more demanding in terms of time and effort.

- Even writing a “GD” (General Diary) or lodging a formal complaint with the police involves a considerable time investment. In 2014, ASK was asked to write up a GD for a young woman who is autistic. Geeta had recently married a man, also autistic, whom she had met at a Paralympics or sports competition for the disabled. Unfortunately for her, her in-laws were vehemently opposed to the marriage and the husband soon disappeared. Geeta was convinced that two of his sisters had him picked up and were now holding him prisoner at their house.

When she came to ASK for help with filing a GD, her worry was not for her husband's safety but her own. Acutely sensitive about her inadequate social skills, Geeta was concerned that her sisters-in-law might take advantage of her drawback and place the entire blame for their brother's abduction and disappearance on her. If that were to happen, Geeta feared, she had no hope of being able to convince either her neighbours or the authorities of her innocence.

ASK accompanied Geeta to file her complaint at the police station. It then joined the police to visit the house where Geeta claimed her husband was being held. Her story proved to be correct. Geeta, however, was not eager to re-unite with her spouse. The whole experience had been too traumatic. For the moment, at least, she was content to withdraw into the safety of her world as a single woman. In all, this simple act of helping a woman by writing a GD for her had taken from 12 noon to 8 P.M.

- The situation is more demanding when ASK is required to go beyond writing up a GD.

The government-run Victim Support Shelter Home, in Dhaka, sent 12-year-old Borsha over to ASK's Half-Way Home. The girl had been rescued by the Railway Police after she was found drugged and unconscious on a train. She had apparently been travelling on her own to visit relatives. It was obvious that the journey was a familiar one for Borsha. Otherwise, there was little chance of finding a girl of 12 in Bangladesh travelling on a train without an adult escort. No doubt her parents had helped her board the train, fully expecting the relatives to meet Borsha at the other end.

While the Victim Support Shelter provides temporary refuge to women, its services are basic. Borsha was very confused from the impact of the drug-laden chocolate she had savoured. She was able to cite neither her name nor her address and, unable to deal with the situation, the government shelter handed her over to ASK. It took almost 10 days of treatment and counselling at the ASK Half-Way Home before Borsha was sufficiently recovered to recall her details. When she did so, ASK sent a photo of Borsha to the Chairman of her Union Parishad, in Mymensingh District, and asked him to confirm Borsha's identity and that of her parents. Satisfied with his response, ASK dispatched a staff to escort Borsha to her home in Mymensingh. There, in the presence of the police and the Chairman of the Union Parishad, Borsha was handed over to her parents.

In all, it took two days for the staff member to travel to and from Mymensingh to reunite Borsha with her family. Overall, it took a total of 12 days, from the time of Borsha's arrival at ASK to the completion of her reunion in Mymensingh, for ASK to conclude one of the 645 “Rapid Response” cases that involved more than referring a survivor to another agency.

Re: Psycho-Social Counselling (PSC)

Psycho-Social Counselling (PSC) carries multiple responsibilities as a component in ASK. It began and continues to function as a component of the Legal Aid Programme but, since 1997, has expanded into a much wider role. Besides providing direct services and training to survivors receiving the legal aid, PSC now carries prime responsibility for introducing and establishing counselling as a tool for HR promotion and protection in Bangladesh. It offers professional training courses in psychotherapy, advocates the relevance of counselling in the national media, and provides workshops on positive child guidance for the benefit of management and teaching staff associated with children.

PSC contracts experts from overseas to teach two courses on Transaction Analysis (TA) in Dhaka. The courses are the only professional training programmes in Bangladesh which are internationally accredited and can be applied towards meeting requirements for certification as TA psychotherapists. Accreditation is from the International Transaction Analysis Association, San Francisco, CA (U.S.A.).

The first of the courses is the one year Diploma in Counselling Course¹⁰. The second is an on-going practical laboratory-based course in counselling techniques, which follows the diploma course. While these two courses are taught by international experts, PSC's staff themselves assume responsibility as trainers for workshops designed for teachers and staff of child-care centres and schools.

In 2014, PSC counselled 331 survivors referred by the Legal Aid Programme, and also led a 3-day training workshop on self-development, attended by 12 users of programme. In addition, PSC:

- Counsellled 87 clients who were self-referred or referred by others. Many such clients are prompted to seek counselling after seeing television programmes to which members of PSC are invited to speak.
- Organized the one-year academic Diploma in Counselling Course, and awarded certificates to 15 out of 20 enrolees. Recipients were from Dhaka University, BRAC University, Rajuk Uttara Model School, Scholastica School, Batighar (an education programme); United Hospital, Dhaka Shishu Hospital, Institute of Child and Mother Health, and Matuail (Dhaka); and several NGOs. The latter include the Dhaka Ahsania Mission, URBAN, JIBITA, and the Monobikash Counselling and Training Centre.
- Organized and managed the lab-based advanced Certified Transactional Analyst Course. A total of 22 individuals, who had successfully completed the diploma course in previous years, took part in the course. Participants were from Dhaka University, BRAC University, Scholastica School, Savar University College, the Apollo Hospital, Shishu Hospital, BIRDEM Hospital, Sikdar Medical College, and three NGOs.

Directly provided training to 184 teachers and staff of schools through two workshops: Workshop on Basic Counselling Skills, and workshop on Self Awareness, Effective Communication, and Stress Management Skills.

10. Course content covers transactional analysis and neuro-linguistic programming.

CHAPTER THREE

ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING

INVESTIGATION UNIT

ASK's Investigation Unit works to ensure transparency and accountability in public institutions. It monitors and investigates violence and HR violations. Investigative methods consist in site visits, direct observation, and extensive interviews with victims, their families, other witnesses, suspects, as well as the police or other government officials. The last category of witnesses is particularly important to ensuring credibility for the findings of the investigation, and for highlighting the ultimate responsibility that the government carries for ensuring human rights.



Getting the victim's angle on attack on minorites, Kornay, Dinajpur, 2014.



Soliciting the viewpoints of the Bangladesh Border Guard in Birganj & Kornay, Dinajpur, 2014)

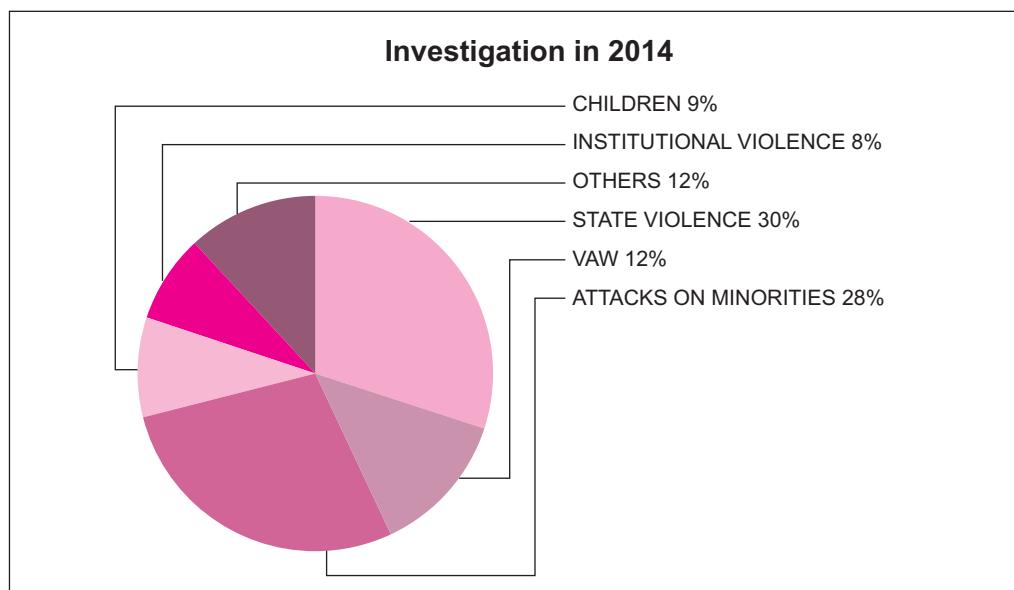
In addition to carrying out investigations, the Unit sends out appeals to the government for remedial action, and refers cases to ASK's Legal Services Programme for legal action (mediation or litigation). Where an infraction can be considered a HR violation, the Unit refers the case to ASK's Advocacy Unit, which is responsible for public interest litigation.

A third function of the Investigation Unit is to mobilize and strengthen HR defenders in the districts. It encourages the formation of Human Rights Defenders Forums (HRDFs) among local activists, and socially conscious journalists, lawyers, doctors, professors, teachers, university students and the like. The Unit trains members of HRDFs and other HR activists in investigative methods and reporting, and encourages them to participate in networks for monitoring, information-sharing and mobilizing local communities for protecting HR through appeals, protests, demonstrations and letter-writing campaigns. Currently, there are 18 HRDFs in 18 districts, which play a front-line role in providing information about local HR violations to the mass media and HR organizations.

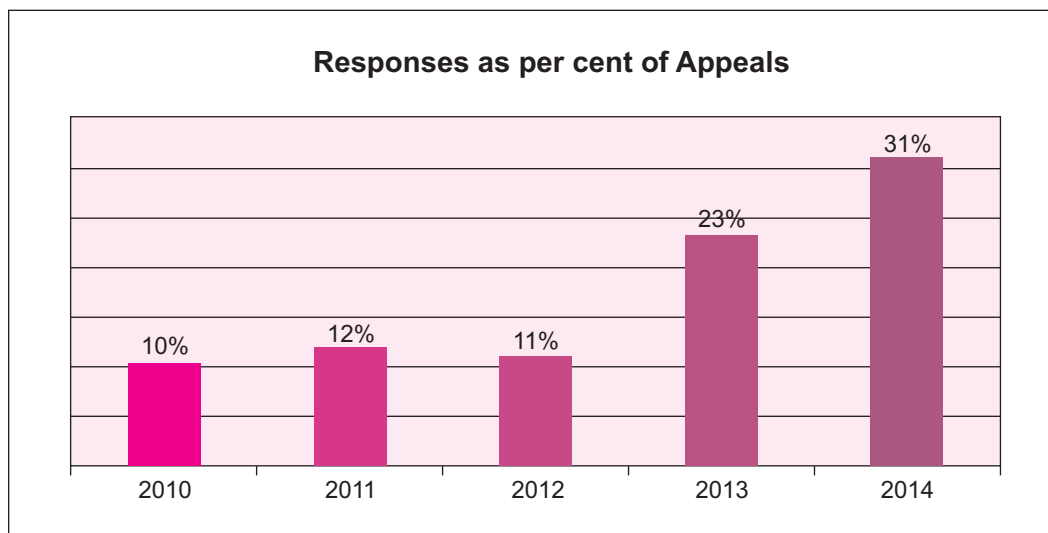
Progress

In 2014, the Investigation Unit:

- Probed 158 incidents of violations, the majority of which were accounted for by violence by the State (30 percent), and attacks on minorities (28 percent). Other incidents investigated were institutional violence (8 percent), VAW (13 percent), violence against children (9 percent) and others 12 percent.



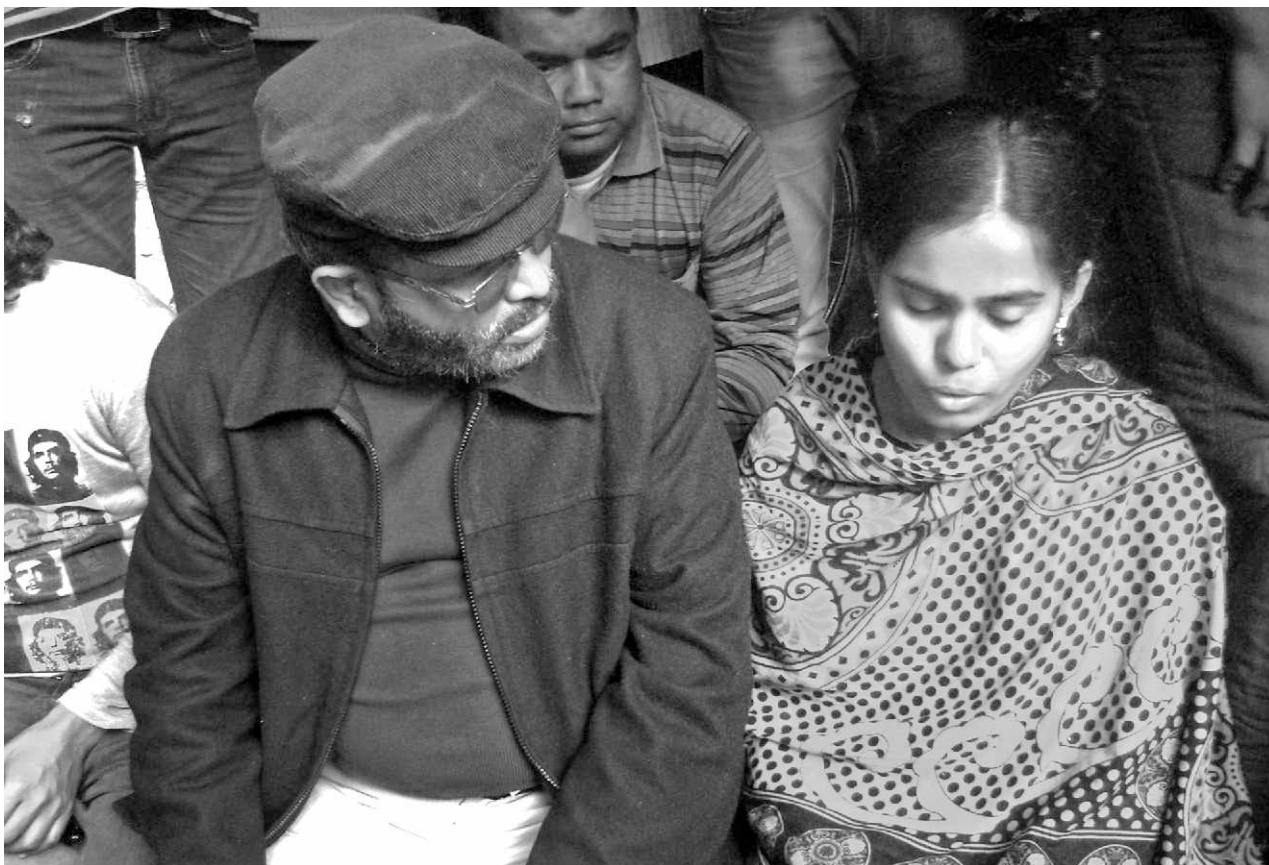
- Appealed to the Government for remedial action with regard to a total of 131 incidents, of which 64 had formed part of its own investigations. The government responded to only 41 or less than one-third of the appeals. Even so, this comprises an improvement over previous years when the response rate ranged from 10 per cent to 23 per cent.



- Organized 13 meetings with HRDFs to commend their activism and encourage them to continue their work in monitoring, including alerting the national media to the occurrence of violations, and mobilizing civil society for HR promotion.
- Provided 2 advanced training sessions on fact-finding in Bagerhat and Dhaka, respectively, to 52 members of HRDFs, 13 of whom were women.
- In addition, the Unit conducted two basic workshops to orient 32 HRDF members, from the districts of Dinajpur and Cox's Bazar, to fact-finding techniques. Eight of the trainees were women.
- As planned, Investigation organized four public discussions in the towns of Kurigram, Bagerhat, Pirojpur and Satkhira. The main theme of discussions in the first three locations was "The Human Rights Situation: the Role of Civil Society". The theme of the discussion in Satkhira was "Development and a Sustainable Political Situation: the Intersections". The discussions were attended by a total of 230 individuals from among HRDFs, lawyers, journalists, social activists and development workers.
- At year end, the Investigation Unit was able to report that the HRDFs had investigated 73 incidents of HR violations in 18 districts. Moreover, the forums had mobilised a number of community protests against such violations in the form of human chains, rallies, and writing letters of appeal to authorities.



Solidarity visit by ASK Executive Director to Char Shankardaha in Rangpur District, 2014.



Solidarity visit: Investigation staff consoles young victim of minority attack. Abhainagar, Jessore, 2014.

- Finally, because its work brings the Unit into direct contact with victims and their families, the Investigation Unit has naturally come to play the role of “accompanier” and “consoler” in extreme cases of rights violations. In 2014, the Unit organized three major solidarity visits, where it was joined by ASK’s Executive Director, to express condolences and meet with government officials to urge action to investigate the attacks and ensure the safety of minority communities in the future.
 - The first was to a remote char Shankardaha in Rangpur District where, following the rape of a woman, the rapist had killed the victim’s 4-year old child by tossing it into a pond. The culprit feared that the child would identify him.
 - The second covered four villages and four days. The villages were Kornai and Birganj, both in Dinajpur District; Gaira village in Thakurgaon; and Shyamnagar in Satkhira, where, following the national elections, massive attacks broke out against Hindus. As a result of the attacks were: 1 person was speared to death; 19 homes burned, 52 homes ransacked, and 3 homes looted. In addition, attacks on business establishments resulted in 3 shops being looted; and 41 shops, ransacked or burnt.
 - The third solidarity visit was to Darkamari Para, Boro Kochua Village, Nawabganj Thana, Dinajpur District, where land-grabbers attacked members of an indigenous community were attacked by land grabbers.

DOCUMENTATION UNIT

The Documentation Unit works closely but in complementarily with the Investigation Unit in HR monitoring. While Investigation relies on direct observation and unpublished information, Documentation uses reports published in newspapers and other media to compile information about the human rights situation in Bangladesh.

Documentation daily scans 9 newspapers and 5 magazines to compile a file of clippings about incidents of violence and rights violations within the country. This file serves as input to the Daily Action Meeting which enables different units to decide what incidents they will follow-up with investigation, PIL, rescue or litigation, as appropriate. It is also used to update a digitalized data base. Documentation regularly generates cumulative statistical tables. The tables, which are distributed to all units, distinguish between different types of rights violation (VAW, violence against minorities, violations by the State etc.).

Besides statistical information, Documentation plays an important public role as a library for the benefit of both ASK staff and external users. It compiles bibliographies, participates in book fairs, handles the sale or complementary distribution of ASK publications. Within ASK itself, Documentation functions to keep ASK staff updated with information about legislative changes, current events and issues of governance that potentially affect law enforcement, the judiciary and HR. It also screens recently acquired films and documentaries to update ASK staff on HR issues and promotion.

In 2014 Documentation Unit:

Activities	No
Books and documents acquired	496
Videos, films, photographs procured	12
New bibliographies compiled	12
Sale and distribution of ASK publications	Sale-Tk.83,137 Distribution-27695
Participation in book fairs	5 fairs
Screen film shows for ASK staff	12
Statistical charts compiled	270
Total users	356

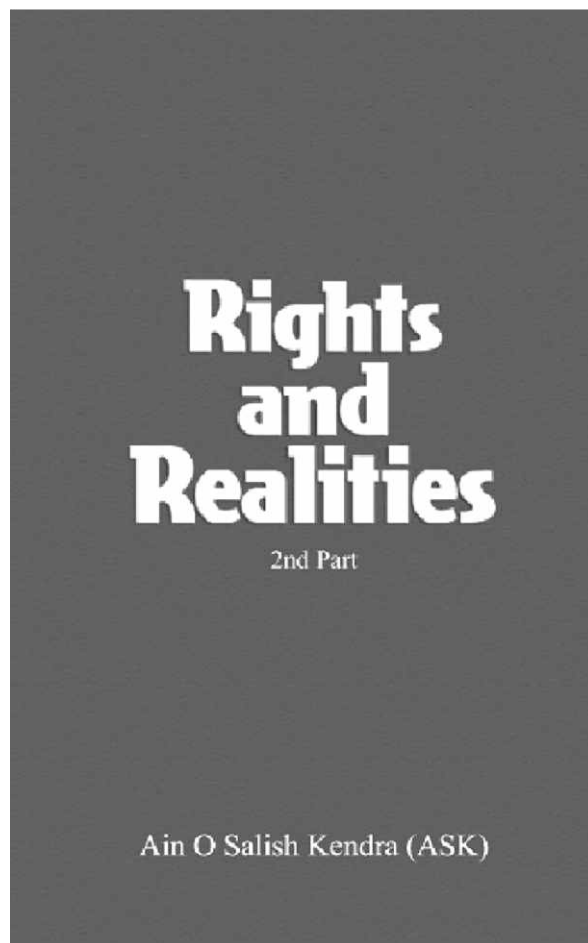
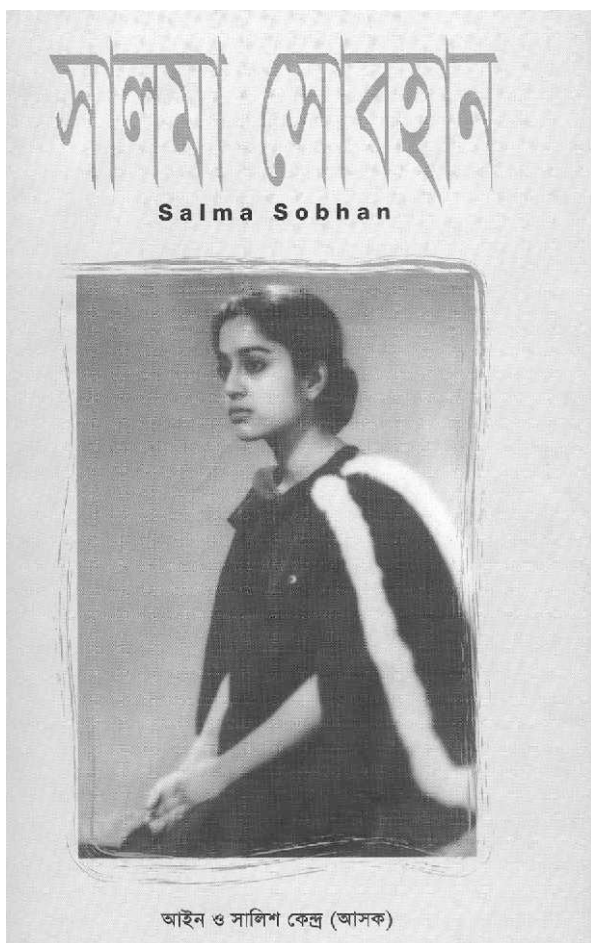
PUBLICATION AND COMMUNICATION UNIT

The Publication Unit of ASK serves as a clearing house of HR information in Bangladesh, written in Bangla and English. It publishes a quarterly journal called The Bulletin (in Bangla), several books and pamphlets a year. In addition, the Unit contributes analytical articles to mainstream newspapers and magazines on current events, recent legislations and judgements of the courts, which are relevant to HR protection.

PROGRESS IN 2014

- Published two books in English and Bangla as well. Titles are: “*Salma Sobhan*” 2nd edition (bi-lingual), and *Rights and Realities (in English)*.

- The topics of the lead articles in the *Bulletin* were well chosen to resonate with current HR concerns in Bangladesh: whether the language of the Supreme Court be Bangla or English (March issue), inter-country disputes over sharing of water from trans-border rivers (June); conflict between the independence, accountability and impeachment of the judges of the Supreme Court (September); and the ongoing War Crimes Trial in Bangladesh (December).
- The Unit contributed 20 articles to leading newspapers. The list of dailies includes: Bonik Barta, Daily Janakantha, Dhaka Tribune, Prothom Alo and Shangbad. Topics discussed were varied and relevant to current interests in the country. Some of the topics were: legal status of third gender in Bangladesh; third gender in India; abduction of school girls in Nigeria; rape in buses; importance of economic solvency for women; articles on laws regarding divorce, fatwa, polygamy, maintenance of children; effects of lengthy court procedures in denying justice.
- PCU organized a total of 11 study circles with staff of other units. Discussions, which are based on books, are valued because they offer staff a chance to catch up on reading. Titles of book covered in 2014 were: *Janasherthey Mamla (PIL)*, *Narir Uttoktokoroner Protibad and Protirodh*, *Srimiti o Katha 71*, *Cristian Paribarik Ain*, *Atmapratikriti*, *Hindu Paribarik Ain*, *Salma Sobhan Sharak Grantho*, *Avivavokotto and Voronposhon*, *Dhorshon Paroberti Ain-e Lorai*, *Ainer Kotha (Muslim Aine-Bibaha, Talak and Denmohor)* and *Bangladesher Jongi Totparata o Tar Bichar*.
- As is usual, Publications organized two meetings with *Bulletin* readers in Sylhet and Dhaka, respectively. These annual meetings are designed to share ideas and create interest in writing articles for the *Bulletin* among new generations of lawyers and activists.





Meeting with Law Students in Dhaka

LEGAL ADVOCACY AND POLICY REFORM UNIT

The Advocacy Unit is critical to ASK's efforts to promote legal reform and improved law enforcement. Such advocacy takes several forms from providing commentary on changes in policies and laws proposed by the Government or suggested by other agencies; to submitting original proposals of one's own; or conducting research on the implications of existing laws for the human rights of specific groups.

- In 2014, e.g., the Advocacy Unit conducted research on laws and policies affecting sex workers in Bangladesh. The research, undertaken for CARE, Bangladesh, was designed to identify gaps in legal protections for people employed in the sex industry.

Public Interest Litigation (PIL)

However, the Unit's most important instrument for advocacy in 2014 was Public Interest Litigation (PIL). The Unit successfully filed a total of seven PILs, a majority of which dealt with police brutality and arbitrary law enforcement. The PILs argued that lack of accountability on the part of law enforcement violated rights such as the right to equal protection under the law, right to freedom from torture, right to life, right to dignity and the like.

1. Writ Petition No. 2131/2014 (Right to Equal Protection of Law). Members of the Hindu community in Sadar Upazila of Lalmonirhat District were systematically ignored by police when they tried to file complaints about threats and violence directed at them. Things came to a head when a Hindu woman, who had fled her abductors, attempted to file a formal complaint with the police. The officers at the police station refused to accept her complaint, labelling it as “inconsequential”.

ASK filed a PIL, charging negligence of duty, failure to protect a member of a minority group, and misuse of power by the police. The High Court issued a Rule Nisi and directed the police of Lalmonirhat to record the woman's complaint. It also directed the police to ensure the security of the Hindu minority in Lalmonirhat. In compliance of court's order, the police recorded the abductee's complaint (as a FIR).

2. Writ Petition No. 2496/2014 (Right to Equal Protection of Law). Three government employees, falsely accused of involvement in a criminal case, were suspended from service even though they had been granted bail. ASK challenged the government's assumption that being granted bail was equivalent to being held in custody. The Court decided in favour of ASK and stayed the order to suspend the three government servants.

3. Writ Petition No. 5024/2014 (Right to Life). Police in Ashulia Thana attempted to pass off the death of a young man in police custody as the result of a traffic accident. After considering evidence supplied by ASK, the court directed that, in order to ensure the accountability of the police department a complaint be filed against three policemen under Section 302 of the Penal Code.

4. Writ Petition No. 2884/2014 (Right to Dignity). A young couple, visiting a village fair, suddenly found themselves besieged by a group of men who objected to an unmarried couple socializing in public. In their zeal, the attackers handed the couple over to the police who took the harassment several steps further. They used the opportunity to place the couple in compromising positions, and took photographs for distribution as pornography on the internet.

As directed by court, the policemen involved in the event were arrested and presented before the Court. The court also ordered the police against misuse of power and criminal activities in the future.

5. Writ Petition No. 11138/2014 (Right to Freedom from Torture). In a bid to extract a confessional statement from a woman, the police of Sylhet Sadar Thana forced alcohol down her throat. On Nov 30, 2014, ASK charged the police with misuse of power, and argued that they had violated Section 167 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The Court issued a Rule Nisi and directed the police department to submit a report about steps taken against the offending policemen on or before April 1, 2015

6. Writ Petition No. 8062/2014 (Right to Life). When a patient jumped to his death from the roof of a hospital because he had failed to receive any kind of medical treatment, ASK filed a suit charging the Dhaka Medical College Hospital with medical negligence. The Court issued a Rule Nisi and directed the hospital to submit a report about steps it was taking against the doctor responsible for treating the patient. The Court also directed the hospital to ensure medical treatment for all patients registered under its care.

7. Writ Petition No. 9520/2014 (Right to Equal Protection of Law). A policeman who had personal differences with a man used the aura of his authority to implicate the man in a false case. Under the guise of arresting him, the policeman shot the man in both legs.

ASK intervened by filing a PIL accusing the police of misuse of power. The Court ruled in favour of the victim and ordered that the offending policeman be arrested. The policeman was also made responsible for covering the costs of the victim's medical treatment.

Promoting PIL as a Tool for Protecting HR

Public Interest Litigation is relatively new to Bangladesh. Consequently, there is a strong need in the districts for more information about its applications and legal requirements. The Advocacy Unit organized a 3-day workshop to discuss the relevance and feasibility of introducing PIL in District Courts. All Judges and Magistrates of Bogra Judgeships and 40 lawyers from eight districts participated in the event.



Workshop on Role and Potentials of PIL in Lower Courts (Bogra)

MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY (MIA) UNIT

The Media and International Advocacy (MIA) Unit is the focal point for ASK's contacts with national and international media, HR networks and mechanisms. As part of Media advocacy, the Unit issues press statements on incidents of HR violations to demand

immediate action or remedy from relevant authorities and organises dialogue as well as conferences with the media.

MIA also maintains the organization's website, which allows for instantaneous sharing of updates on ASK's regular activities, and produces as well as disseminates a monthly E-Bulletin on HR trends.

The Unit works closely with international HR organizations, and disseminates information on HR violations in Bangladesh. It also responds to violations of HR in other parts of the globe through petitions, urgent appeals, and letters of solidarity or by supporting initiatives taken by others on these cases.



International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances

30 August 2014. is observed as the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. Though enforced disappearance has not yet been defined in the legal system of Bangladesh, in the recent years, incidents of enforced disappearance have grown to an alarming height. According to ASK documentation, based on the media reports and ASK's own fact findings, 76 disappearances have allegedly ... [Read more.](#)



Assault on the Coordinator of International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC) in Bandarban District

27 August 2014. ASK condemns the assault on the coordinator of International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC), Hana Shams Ahmed at Bandarban. According to Hana and different media reports, few perpetrators initiated the assault on Hana Shams Ahmed and her fellow traveler while they were ... [Read more.](#)

Arrest of a Journalist at Sylhet and Assault on Another at Barisal

20 August 2014. ASK condemns the arrest of special correspondent of 'Daily Manobjomin' in Sylhet under the charge of an alleged rape and also the assault on the general secretary of Barisal press club. According to media reports, special correspondent of the 'Daily Manobjomin' in Sylhet, Chowdhury Mumtaz Ahmed had been arrested on 19 August 2014 and a rape ... [Read more.](#)



August 2014 - Website post on press statements.

ASK has special consultative status with UN ECOSOC and is responsible for submitting reports to UN HR bodies regarding Bangladesh's **PROGRESS** in meeting its international HR obligations. In addition, it engages in advocacy together with numerous international and regional networks, such as Asian NGO Network on National Institutions (ANNI), Strategic Advocacy Working Group on UNHRC, South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR), FORUM-ASIA, APWLD etc. and maintains cooperation through facilitating their advocacy activities or fact finding missions in Bangladesh.

PROGRESS IN 2014

Media Advocacy

- In 2014, MIA issued 53 press statements to the print, electronic and alternative media. Most of the media chose to publish the statements from ASK. Many went further by adding commentary to provide context.

Some Highlights from ASK Press Statements

Re: Extra Judicial Killings

- Press statement of 27 January 2014: ASK expressed grave concern over death of 15 people in “gun fights” with law enforcement agencies, which took place between 1 to 27 January, 2014.
- Press statement of 4 March 2014: ASK expressed grave concern over the death of three people in gunfights with the police at Kadamtali and Savar, both in Dhaka District.

Re: International Issues:

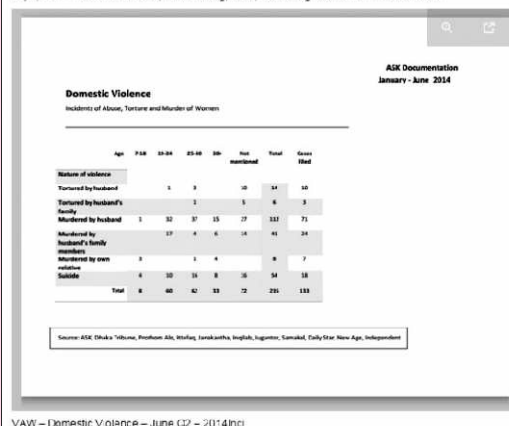
- Press statement of 11 May 2014: ASK strongly condemned the brutal killing of Pakistani HR Defender, Rashid Rehman, who was shot dead by unidentified assailants at his office in Multan, Pakistan.
- Press statement of 13 July 2014: ASK expressed concern and strong condemnation over the air attacks by Israel on Gaza, which resulted in the death of 159 people, including women, children and civilians.
- Press statement of 31 July 2014: ASK denounced Operation Protective Edge by Israel, resulting in the massacre of 1,300 women, children and civilians at refugee camps in Gaza.

Inappropriate Remarks by Ministers and Government Officials:

- Press statement of 9 March 2014: ASK vehemently protested remarks by the Minister of Shipping to the effect that extra judicial killings were not uncommon in the United States and, hence, acceptable in Bangladesh.
- Press statement 30 November 2014: ASK sharply condemned the remark by the Chair, Parliamentary Committee on Women and Children, that VAW was normal to men and, as such, the reduction of such violence depended on how women conducted themselves.

Incidents of Domestic Violence : Six Month Overview 2014

July 1, 2014 - Domestic Violence, HR Monitoring, Slides, Violence Against Women - no comments



ASK - Website post on trends in domestic violence.

International Advocacy

The Unit prepared the Bangladesh chapter assessing the independence and effectiveness of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in Bangladesh as part of international advocacy with the Asian NGO Network on National HR Institutions (ANNI). ANNI regularly monitors national HR watch points and meets annually to gauge their effectiveness. MIA presented the chapter's findings at the 7th Regional Consultation of ANNI, which was held in Taiwan from 22 April to 23 April 2014.

Solidarity Actions

- The Unit issued two letters of condolence, expressing regret over the death of two prominent HR activists. The first, to condole the demise of Dr. Irene Fernandez, an activist in Malaysia, who fought against the exploitation of Bangladeshi migrant workers in her country, was sent to TENAGANITA (Women's Force). The second, expressing deep regret over the brutal murder of Mr. Rashid Rehman, prominent HR activist in Pakistan, was sent to The NHRC of Pakistan as well as the High Commission of Pakistan in Bangladesh. On 9 May 2014, MIA followed up by signing a

statement issued by the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), representing 47 HR organisations across Asia, condemning the killing of Mr. Rashid Rehman.

- When an attempt was made to abduct Mohammed Nur Khan, Director, ASK's Investigation Unit, MIA immediately sent out an urgent appeal to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression; the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association; and the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of HR Defenders.

In addition, the unit sent out an urgent alert to Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, World Organisation against Torture (OMCT), the International Federation for HR (FIDH), the Asian Forum for HR and Development (FORUM-ASIA), the Asian HR Commission (AHRC), Front Line Defenders, member organisations of Asian NGO Network on National HR Institutions and also through ASK's E-Bulletin.

Digital Advocacy

- Effectively maintained its website as a result of which the number of unique visitors rose from 4,819 in January to 5,932 in December; the number of visits increased marginally from 10,865 to 10,966 but the number of hits increased from 276,960 to 455,751.
- As a result of MIA's participation and advocacy at the international level, visits to the ASK website from overseas increased over 275 percent between 2013 and 2014. Because data for the first third of 2013 was unavailable, one third of the visits for 2014 have been excluded for purposes of analysis.

Visits from Overseas				
Country	2013 (May-Dec)	2014		Per cent Increase
	(2/3rd of Yr.)	Full Yr.	2/3rd of Yr.	
USA	196,928	607,327	404,885	206%
Great Britain	84,786	397,856	265,237	313%
India	14,969	202,206	134,804	901%
Philippines	14,238	82,312	54,875	385%
TOTAL	310,921	1,289,701	859,801	277%

The increase in visits is largely accounted for by India and the Philippines. Visits from these two Asian countries rose 650 percent from 29,207 visits during two-thirds of the year in 2013, to 189,679 visits during an equivalent period of time in 2014. MIA attributes this to systematic networking with the Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI) Consultations in India and the 6th Human Rights Defenders Forum in the Philippines.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

CHILD RIGHTS (CRU) UNIT

While concerned to eliminate child labour in the long run, ASK's Child Rights Unit accepts the reality that, for the time being, children living in poverty in Bangladesh have no alternative but to work in order to support themselves and their families. Accordingly, CRU focuses its efforts on:

- a) Advocacy and monitoring of the child rights situation in Bangladesh. The Unit serves as the Secretariat for 31 child rights organizations in Bangladesh, which are responsible for the shadow report and UPR Report (Universal Periodic Review) that is periodically submitted to the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) Committee of the UN and OHCHR (Office of the High Commission for Human Rights), on the status of child rights in Bangladesh relative to Bangladesh' commitments under the CRC.
- b) Enabling working children and children at risk of being placed in employment by their households, to acquire the education and skills they need to ultimately move into more rewarding and remunerative jobs, thereby breaking the cycle of poverty-child labour-poverty in which they are trapped.

CRU follows a multi-dimensional approach to providing education. The approach combines non-formal education methodology, with a variety of other interventions that are designed to help children to acquire a buoyant sense of their own capabilities and future possibilities; re-orient parental attitudes so as to transform child-rearing patterns from providing negative reinforcement to providing positive encouragement; and bring about a significant change in the perspectives of both the community and the government regarding child rights and their own responsibilities for actualizing such rights. Consequently, in addition to providing non-formal primary school education (up to Class 5) and vocational training through community-based “drop-in” centres, “learning centres” and “socialization centres”, CRU offers a series of intensive training workshops to change social perspectives among not only children, but parents, employers (using child labour), middle class school children whose homes employ child domestic workers, community leaders, and government officials.

CRU's community mobilization efforts do not end with training and awareness-raising, but extends to actively supporting the development of neighbourhood committees and watch points that proactively monitor and protect child rights, especially the rights of children who work for a living. In the final analysis, what CRU seeks is the transformation of whole communities into pro-child rights

neighbourhoods that actively take responsibility for ensuring not only child workers' access to education, health, recreation etc. but for making sure that provider institutions themselves, i.e. the NGOs, schools, hospitals, and playgrounds etc.— meet criteria for quality and integrity. For example, the various learning centres and socialization centres under CRU are regularly monitored by members of community watch points.

Finally, CRU stresses working closely with locally elected representatives and officials of local bureaus of the departments of education, health, and children's affairs. Although such representatives and officials carry formal responsibility for implementing State policies regarding child rights and universal primary education, they often lack entry points that allow meaningful engagement with the community.

PROGRESS IN 2014:

(a) Advocacy and Monitoring

- In association with nine other organizations of the Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh, ASK developed a framework for monitoring the performance of the Government of Bangladesh relative to its obligations under the CRC.



Small group work on developing tools to Monitor CRC in Bangladesh.

- Coordinated discussions among 22 member organizations of the Child Rights Governance Assembly (CRGA) and Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh, and developed the shadow report to the CRC Committee of the UN. Save the Children provided technical support for the exercise;
- Drafted a Children's Ombudsman Act, outlining the need for such a body, the modus for its establishment, and the ombudsman's rules and responsibilities. ASK shared the draft act with the CRGA and the Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh before submitting it to the Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs.



ASK at discussions on Draft Child Ombudsman Act.

(b) Education

In 2014, CRU managed a total of 6 drop-in centres, 100 community-based learning centres, 16 Socialization Centres and 2 Creative Learning Centres for the benefit of three broad groups of children: children involved in a miscellany of urban occupations such as shop helper, tea-stall helper, transport helper, tokai or recycling, assistant in small factories etc.; children employed as household help (domestic work); and children engaged in begging. CRU made use of its education programme to provide:

- Vocational training to 105 working children.
- Basic education (up to Class 5) to 5,134 working children, 50 percent of who were engaged in a miscellany of urban informal sector work (shop helper, transport helper, scavenger in recycling); 40 percent, in domestic work; and 10 percent, in begging.
- Mainstreaming into government secondary schools for 595 children who had recently graduated from the learning centres and drop-in centres.
- Link-up with sponsors who will underwrite the education costs for 52 of the children mainstreamed into formal secondary schools.
- Job placement for 73 children.
- Access to health services (first aid, diagnosis, tests and medical care) for 1,926 children; psychological counselling to 1373 children; and warm (clothing for 174 children).
- Organized an array of extra-curricular events (excursions, parties) and courses (art, music, and dancing, acting, and assembling newspapers from news clippings) from which 8,231 children benefited.
- Organized and facilitated a total of 83 meetings during 2014, over 50 percent of which were with local elected representatives and government officials, one-fifth with parents, and the rest with members of community watch points and employers of child workers.
- Organized a total of 24 training workshops of which 6 were for parents; 6 for employers, 6 for community members, 6 for watch points etc.

TABLE: Child Rights Unit in 2014

Occupation of Children	Event	Boy	Girl	Total
Occupations children enrolled in CRU basic education	NA			
• Employed in domestic work	NA	825	1,246	2,071
• Involved in begging	NA	219	291	510
• Engaged in "miscellaneous" forms of employment.	NA	1,321	1,232	2,553
Programme Achievements				
No. of children:	NA	919	1,007	1,926
• Provided first aid, check-ups and healthcare				
• Provided psychological counselling	NA	422	951	1373
• Provided legal support	NA	-	3	3
• Provided warm clothing	NA	79	95	174
• Matched up with a sponsor	NA	9	43	52
• Placed in formal secondary schools.	NA	200	395	595
• Provided vocational training.	NA	15	90	105
• Placed in jobs.	NA	33	40	73
Special events for children				
No. of children's parties organized	1	123	89	212
No of excursions/outings arranged & no. of children participating	3	169	108	277
No. of children benefited from courses in music, art, drama.	NA	2365	2769	5134
No. of newspaper assembly exercises arranged, and no of children participating.	226	1065	1543	2608
No of meetings organized for/with:				
• Parents	35	30	481	511
• Employers of working children.	16	66	210	276
• Community Watch Groups	23	113	253	366
• Local Government representatives.	9	78	45	1236
No. of Training Workshops				
• Parents Workshop	6	10	155	165
• Employers Workshop	6	127	39	166
• Community Watch Group Workshop	6	180	425	605
• Workshop for children placed in formal school.	6	128	460	588
• Workshop on <i>My World</i> [*] for children enrolled in basic education.	151	747	862	1,609

^{*} *My World* is a book published by ASK, which familiarizes children with aspects of their physical, social and cultural environment.

CHAPTER FIVE

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ASK's institutional development activities are managed by three strategically important units Administration, Accounts and Finance and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) units. They ensure the smooth functioning of the organization.

Administration Unit (ADMIN)

The Administration Unit (ADMIN) provides logistical support for the smooth running of the organization and meets all legal and other requirements of the Government and ASK'S Executive Committee. It looks after all infrastructural and personnel management.

Accounts and Finance (A&F)

The Accounts and Finance (A&F) Unit manages ASK's finances and prepares accounts. It manages pay roll and other funds for implementation of programs, purchase of services, equipment, supplies and insurance. It also report to donors, NGOAB, DC Office and any other reports relating to accounts and finance.

Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit (PME)

The Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Unit prepares project proposals, regularly monitors and evaluates implementation of programme, liaises with donors, prepares reports for GoB, donors, ASK Executive Committee, ASK management and others, providing logistics support to evaluation exercises. It develops formats for monitoring, supervision and maintains an MIS system.

PROGRESS IN 2014

- Policy for receiving professional services, policy for publication & editorial guidelines and Crèche policy finalized and operationalized.
- Financial Manual and HR Manual reviewed.
- Annual general meeting of ASK held on 31 January, 2014.
- ASK commemorated the death anniversary of its four founder members at Chayanat Auditorium on 11th February, 2014.
- ASK annual progress review conference (Staff Retreat) was held in October 2014 in BRAC CDM, Savar, Dhaka.
- Process of annual staff appraisal completed.
- Arranged ten interviews and recruited ten staff.
- All personnel files of staff have been updated.

-
- Obtained approval of budget from NGOAB for a project.
 - Two audits completed (Global and project).
 - Three activity reports and financial statement prepared for Executive Committee meeting.
 - Twelve reports prepared for DC office.
 - Four reports for NGOAB prepared.
 - ASK Annual report 2013 prepared and published.
 - Prepared 18 Monitoring reports.
 - Completed Asset insurance.
 - Prepared bi-annual, annual and financial reports for donors.
 - Prepared two Country Strategy Monitoring report for donor.
 - A committee has been formed with six members for ASK's Crèche. Five children are using the Crèche in a regular basis.
 - Executive Director of ASK participated in national and international conferences and meetings; meeting with foreign delegates and donors agencies and Embassies. She also attended TV shows and programmes covering issues on human rights, minority rights, disappearance, extra judicial killing, and International women's day etc. covering different media. She also visited different programmes of ASK.
 - A long term and effective Organizational Development (OD) Process has been started in ASK with the Technical Assistance of Swiss Development Cooperation, one of the development partner of the consortium project of ASK. A six members Organizational Development team has been formed within ASK. The OD has two aspects: a) financial and administrative processes and b) Knowledge Management and Institutional Development. The first aspect has been started from November, 2013. Financial and Procurement Policy and Human Resource Policy have been developed and it is under the process of approval. The second aspect has been started from March 2014, with assistance of one international and one national consultant. Knowledge Management strategy development and result based monitoring system development is going on simultaneously and hopefully by March, 2015 it will be completed.

ANNEX I

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

AS at 31 December 2014

Particulars	Amount in Taka	
	2014	2013
Assets:		
Non -Current Assets:		
Property, Plant & Equipments	48,828,056	50,236,086
Current Assets:	147,082,327	141,144,609
Advance and Security Deposit	1,300,000	840,020
Membership Subscription	1,600	2,000
Stock of Stationeries	-	543,542
Fund Receivable	593,657	47,331,366
Program Advance	-	484,853
Cash & Cash Equivalents	145,187,070	91,942,828
Total	195,910,382	191,380,695
Equity & Liabilities:	194,814,147	189,388,339
Capital Fund	153,575,635	157,223,133
Gratuity Fund	41,238,512	32,165,206
Non -Current Liability:		
Current Liability:	1,096,235	1,992,356
Liability for Expenses	1,094,035	1,989,256
Advance Membership Subscription	2,200	3,100
Total	195,910,382	191,380,695

ANNEX II

ASK: SUPPORT SYSTEM

	Number of Unit-Supported CBOs:	Working Areas
HRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biddalaya Nattya Dal (BNAD): 52. Manobadhikar Nattaya Parishad (MNP): 13 	13 Districts
GSJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manobadhikar Songrokkhan Parishad (MSP): 10. Manobadhikar Nari Samaj (MNS): 10. Manobadhikar Ainjibi Parishad (MAP): 10 	10 Districts
Outreach Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lawyers Forum: (7) 	7 Districts
Investigation Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights Defenders Forum: 18 	18 Districts (Unit itself conducts investigations in all districts).

Location of BNADs: Schools & Districts

Dhaka: Saint Joseph Higher Secondary School, Rayer Bazar High School, Lalmatia Girl's School, Ali Hossain High School.

Gazipur: Harinal High School, Mofizuddin High School, Razia Sultana Girls High School, Gazipur Umeda Begum Girls High School.

Gaibandha: Sadhinotar Rojot Joyonti Girls High School, Rebeka Habib Girls High School, Tulshighat Kashinath High School, N.H Modern High School.

Jhenaidah: Shisukunja School & College, Jheinaidah S.P. Secondary School, Shaheed Smrity Bidyapith, Jheinaidah Wazir Ali High School & College.

Joypurhat: Khanjanpur Mission Girls High School, Joypurhat Girls High School, Dogachhi High School, Kasiabari High School.

Kishoreganj: Arjot Atorjan High School, Ajimuddin High School, Kishorganj Girls High School, Zilla Shoroni Girls High School.

Kushtia: Kolokakoli Secondary School, Mohini Mohon Biddyapith, Milpara Secondary School, Kushtia High School.

Mymensingh: Mymensing Laboratory High School, Premier Ideal School, The Edward Institution, Mohila Udayan Samiti High School.

Naogaon: Central Girls High School, P.M. Girls High School, Morchula Girls High School, Jonokollan Model High School.

Netrokona: Jahanara Smrity High School, Rajur Bazar Collegiate School, Netrokona Adorsho Girls High School, Dotto High School.

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Pabna: Jannat Bibi Jubily Girls High School, Central Girls High School, Selim Najir High School, Shaheed Fazlul Haque Powra High School.

Sirajganj: Victoria High School, Sabuj Kanon High School, Kowmi Jute Mill High School, Hoimobala Girls School.

Tangail: Tangail Shibnath High School, Bibekananda High School and College, Tangail Girls School, Dighulia Shaheed Mizanur Rahman High School.

Partner NGOs: 21

Barisal: Association of Voluntary Action for Society (AVAS).

Bogra: Program for Eco-Social Development (PESD).

Chittagong: Organisation for Women's Development in Bangladesh (OWDEB).

Dhaka: Shakham Sessashebee Sangstha (SSS).

Gaibandha Sadar: Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK).

Hobigonj: Hobigonj Unnayan Sangsta (HUS).

Jhenaidah Sadar: Welfare Efforts (WE).

Joypurhat Sadar: National Development Council (NDC).

Kushtia Sadar: Mukti Nari o Shishu Unnayan Shangstha.

Kishoregonj: Peoples Oriented Program Implementation (POPI).

Kurigram: Solidarity.

Mymensing Sadar: Social Association for Rural Advancement (SARA).

Naogaon Sadar: Ancholic Palli Unnayan Sangstha (APUS).

Netrakona Sadar: Shabolomby Unnayan Samity (SUS).

Pabna Sadar: Pabna Prostisruti (PP).

Rajshahi: Barendra Unnayan Prochesta (BUP).

Rajshahi: Mohila Sanghati Parishad (MSP).

Sirajganj Sadar: Sirajganj Uttaran Mohila Shangstha (SUMS).

Sathkhira: Society for Development and Education of Small Household (SoDESH), Agrogoti Sangstha(AS).

Tangail: Rural Poor Development Organisation (RPDO).

Donor Partners: 8

Donor Consortium

- The Royal Norwegian Embassy, Dhaka
- The Swedish Embassy, Dhaka
- NETZ-Germany
- Danish Embassy
- Embassy of Switzerland

Individual Donor

- Save the Children International
- ICCO Cooperation
- Zubaan

Legal Aid Clinics in Dhaka: 12

Mirpur
Johnson Road
Goran
Kamrangichar
Keraniganj
Dhalpur at Jatrabari
Victim Support Centre (VSC) at Tejgaon
Hemayetpur (Savar)
Gazipur with Department of Women Affairs Shelter Home.
Berri Bandh at Mohammadpur
Talbag (BILLS) at Savar(Temporary basis, only to support Rana Plaza victims)
Azampur Legal clinic, Uttara

Centres for Providing Support to Children: (122)

Type of Centre	In Dhaka	Outside Dhaka
Drop in Centres	6	-
Community based Learning Centre	35	65
Socialization Centre	6	10
Creative Learning Centre	2	-

National Networks

Bangladesh Shishu Odhikar Forum (BSAF): 170 member organizations to campaign for the implementation of the Child Rights Convention.

Beijing plus Five for Women's Rights: a coalition of women's organizations to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted by the Government of Bangladesh.

Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP): coordinates campaigns for the right to shelter of slum dwellers and mobilizes them to demand their rights.

Citizen's Initiative on CEDAW: a network of 38 organizations formed in 2007 to prepare reports for the UN CEDAW Committee and to campaign for implementation of CEDAW.

Citizen's Initiatives to Address Domestic Violence: a network of 40 organizations formed in 2007 for advocacy on legislation for Domestic Violence.

Child Rights Governance Assembly (CRGA): A civil society advocacy network of 22 organizations including children and youth organizations.

Human Rights Forum, Bangladesh (HRFB): A national platform of 19 non-governmental organisations working to protect and promote human rights in Bangladesh. Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) having UNECOSOC consultative status took the initiative to form this forum and has been working as the Secretariat of the Forum since inception.

ANNEX II

Sramik Nirapotta Forum: a network of 14 organizations concerned with safety at the workplace and workers' health. Formed after the collapse of the Spectrum Sweater Industries building in Polashbari, Savar it has campaigned for workers' safety through the media, and filed PILs to establish corporate responsibility for workers' deaths and injuries.

Samajik Protirodh Committee: a network of 52 women's groups formed to resist violence against women by both state and non-state actors, to campaign for participation of women in public decision-making and to resist the rise of religious extremism. The Secretariat is located in the Bangladesh Mahila Porishod.

The Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh: a civil society network which is working to promote child rights.

International Networks

Asia Pacific Forum for Women, Law and Development (APWLD): formed after the Nairobi Conference. Based in Chiang Mai, Thailand, APWLD networks with legal and women's rights organisations across Asia and the Pacific to campaign for women's rights, to create awareness of rights and to draft recommendations for legal reform.

Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI): A network of human rights organisations as well as defenders engaged with National Human Rights Institutions in Asia, to ensure the accountability of these bodies for the promotion and protection of human rights. It was formed on December 2006 to strengthen domestic human rights protection mechanisms in accordance with international human rights standards.

End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT International): works against commercial sexual exploitation of children. Member NGOs in 70 countries and the secretariat is in Bangkok.

FORUM-ASIA (FA): A membership-based human rights organisation "committed to the promotion and protection of all human rights including the right to development" which has 46 member organizations from 17 countries across Asia.

IWRAW Asia Pacific: The only regional/international NGO working with the CEDAW Convention as a main tool for change in the Asia Pacific as well as in filling gap between the promise of women's rights and their actual realisation.

Migrants' Forum in Asia (MFA): raises awareness about migrant workers' rights and fair working conditions and creates structures of support. Secretariat located in Manila.

South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR): A democratic regional network with a large membership base of people committed to addressing human rights issues at both national and regional levels. SAHR's basic policy is to identify the gaps in regional initiatives and to undertake activities which do not duplicate the work carried out by other regional or national NGOs.

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South Asia Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR): A regional public forum for the promotion of respect for universal values of human rights, the independence of rights and the invisibility of rights based in Kathmandu.

We Can End Violence against Women: an international campaign against domestic violence. Holds meetings, seminars, workshops and publishes materials on violence against women and personal and collective measures to prevent gender based violence. ASK is currently Chair of the national committee.

Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML): an international solidarity network that engages with problems faced by women under Islamic laws.

British Association of Counseling and Psycho-therapy (BACP): It is a professional body, membership organization that sets standards for therapeutic practice and provides information for therapist, clients of therapy.

ASK Members

Founder Members

Late Mr. Aminul Haq
Late Barrister Salma Sobhan
Late Justice K. M. Subhan
Late Advocate Abdul Khaleque
Sir Fazle Hasan Abed
Dr. Hameeda Hossain
Ms. Khursheed Erfan Ahmed
Ms. Taherunnessa Abdullah
Barrister Amirul Islam

Executive Committee Members

Taherunnessa Abdullah (Chairperson)
Sultana Kamqal (Ex-Officio)(Member)
Ms. Roushan Jahan (Treasurer)
Advocate Dr. Faustina Pereira (Member)
Mr. Md. Nur Khan (Member)
Mr. Rokshana Khondokar
Barrister Nihad Kabir
Barrister Sara Hossain
Md. Asaduzzaman

General Members

Afsana Wahab
Dilruba Shahana
Dr. Faustina Pereira
Fatema Rashid Hasan
Isaac Robinson
Khurshid Alam
Karunamoy Chakma
Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta
Md. Asaduzzaman
Md. Nur Khan
Barrister Nihad Kabir
Neela Matin
Roushan Jahan Parvin
Rokshana Khondokar
Roushan Jahan
Sultana Kamal
Barrister Sara Hossain
Shameem Akhtar
Syed Mahbubar Rahman
Tahmina Rahman
Tanzina Huq Tiru
Advocate Z.I. Khan Panna
Zaved Hasan Mahmood

ASK Team

Executive Director

Sultana Kamal

Directors

Md. Nur Khan, Investigation and Documentation

Rebeka Sultana, Director Finance and Accounts

Human Rights Awareness Unit: Motahar Uddin Akand (Sr. Deputy Director), Md. Jahedul Alam (Sr. Coordinator), Jaganmoy Paul, Mst Sheuli Khatun, Solnara Aktar, Rokhshana Pervin, Burhan Uddin, Mahmuda Akter Munni, Rakibul Hassan, Nirjhar Adhikari.

Gender and Social Justice Unit: Md. Mozahidul Islam, Sanaiyya Faheem Ansari (Sr. Deputy Director), Sitara Shamim, Taufiq Al Mannan (Sr. Coordinator), Mahbubul Alam, Apurba Kumar Das, Dil Afroz Akter, Ashik Iqbal, Emran Hossen.

Mediation & Rapid Response Unit: Asma Khanom Ruba, Kuheli Sultana, Nina Goswami (Sr. Deputy Director), Nahid Shams, Selina Akhter (Sr. Coordinator), Shithi Rani Das, Shilpi Saha, Shamsun Nahar, Sumita Bagchi, Mahmuda Khatun Maya, Parul Akhter, Dil Afroze Islam, Shirina Akhter, Suraiya Parvin, Dilara Momtaj Moni, Shanta Ahmed, Ayesha Begum, Roma Biswas, Kaniz Sharmin.

Litigation Unit: Salma Jabin (Deputy Director), Abdur Rashid, Farhana Afroj, Mizanur Rahman, Momtaj Begum, Monira Akter, Nasrin Akter, Snigdha Saha, Topan Kumar Sarker, Ataullah Nurul Kabir, Maksuel Chakma.

Outreach Unit: Dilip Kumar Paul (Deputy Director), Rehana Sultana, Md. Shahinuzzaman, Md. Mostafizur Rahman, Mithun Kumar Das, Sultan Mahmud Milon, Tangia Alam Tammi.

Support Service and Half Way Home Unit: Roushan Jahan Pervin (Sr. Deputy Director), Arpita Rani Das (Asst. Coordinator), Syeda Parvez Khanam, Ayesha Islam (Field Worker), Rokeya Begum, Maleka Begum, Mary Baroi, Morzina Akhter Beauty, Mollica Bhattachariya (part-time).

Child Rights Unit (Consortium): Gita Chakraborty (Sr. Deputy Director), Nargis Akhter (Sr. Coordinator), Meheraj Jahan, Jahan Ara Pervin, Mina Sanyal, Shamsun Nahar Shewly, Ali Akram Tarafder, Kamrun Nessa, Atia Afrin, Rehana Pervin, Nargis Akter Mafia, Nazma Akter, Shammi Akter, Shahana Sultana, Ferdousi, Lutfunnessa, Nahida Sultana Pali, Hasina Nazneen Sathi, Rehana Pervin, Sayeda Nupur, Umme Kulsum Akter Parvin.

Child Rights Unit (SC Project): Ambica Roy (Coordinator), Rita Parven (Asstt. Coordinator), Rasheda Akter (Coordinator), Luna Sarkar, Pervin Akter Baby, Selina Akter Seli, Farzana Khanam, Mohsena Begum, Reshma Akhter, Shahanaz Akhter, Rabeya Akter Himu, Padmabati Debi, Nahid Sultana Runi, Nayon Shaha, Jebun Nahar, Nabila Iqram, Mizanur Rahman, Lutfu Begum, Farhana Nazir, Monika Rani Dey, Rokeya Begum, Maksuda Khan, Rafiza Akter, Pushpa Rani, Mirza Shammi Akter, Nargis Akter, Shamima Yasmin, Umme Kulsum Rekha, Fariya Biplobi, Selina Jahan, Selina Akter, Parvin Akter, Anisa Akhter, Rashida Akter Rozi, Sufia Akter Sufi, Farhana

ANNEX II

Momtaz Liza, Md. Mostafizur Rahman, Sumona Haque, Nusrat Jahan Khairunnessa, Kaniz Sharifa, Shahana Akter Bithi, Shamima Akter, Sabina Yesmin.

Child Rights Unit (Prevent Child Begging Project-PCB): Asadujjaman (Coordinator), Salma Ikram, Hosne Ara Hoque, Rashida Begum, Megdaline Tripura, Monira Khatun, Nilufa Ahmed, Mabiha Akter, Shaheen Mahbub, Mahmuda Akter Laboni.

Psycho-Social Counseling (Component): Nasima Akter (Counsellor), Shaheen Islam (Advisor), Runa Khandakar, Sheikh Zadi Rezina Parvin, Sunzida Islam (Counselor), Nurunnahar Begum.

Investigation Unit: Abu Ahmed Faijul Kabir, Anirban Saha, John Asit Das, Mohammed Tipu Sultan (Sr. Deputy Director), Topote Bhattacharjee, Md. Mahabub Alam, Md. Liakat Ali.

Documentation Unit: Fahmida Zaman, Fatema Zannati, Jharna Khanam, Nargis Akhter, Zafreen Sattar (Sr. Coordinator).

Publication & Communication Unit: Kaniz Khadija Surovy, Shaheen Akhtar (Sr. Editor), Amrin Khan,

Media & International Advocacy Unit: Takia Sultana, Md. Billah Hossain Ibne Rahman. Md. Ashik Ahmed, Tamanna Hoq Riti, Aklima Ferdows Lisa, Nafeesa Shamsuddin, Kamrujjahan Flora, Md. Amanatullah, Shariful Islam Selim, Ishrat Ashtary, Md. Modaschhir Rahman.

Legal Advocacy and Policy Reform Unit: Abu Obaidur Rahman (Sr. Deputy Director), Abantee Nurul. Mahjabin Rabbani, Md. Samiul Alam Sarker, Nurul Islam, Shamima Nasrin.

Training Unit: Tanvia Roselin Sultana (Coordinator), Momy Monzury Chowdhury, Tasmin Akter, Mst. Wahida Begum, Ayesha Akter, Md. Sajjid Ahmed, Moshfec Ara, Anjuman Hossain, Mousumi Megdalena Chisim, M. Monsur Ali.

Administration Unit: Md. Moqsud Maleque (Deputy Director), Mahmuda Sultana, Shirin Aktar, Tahsina Ahmed., Sabina Yeasmin, Md. Rakibul Hasan, Md. Haider Ali, Fazila Begum, Md. Mohshin Ali, Nur E. Alam, Zahera Begum, Md. Sekander Ali, Mosharaf Hossain, Anil Chandra Mandal, Mariam Begum, Md. Abu Musa, Mintu Barua, Rizwanul Haq, Shamim Hossain, Abedul Moula, Khokon Gomez, Nurun Nahar Rekha, Amena Begum, Fatema Begum, Laily Begum, Laila Begum, Majeda Begum, Anjoli Baroi, Mst. Nilufa, Md. Helal Uddin Shohan, Md. Moshraf Hossain, Md. Farukur Rahman, Ms. Rina Khatun, Mahbub Alam, Nazmul Hossain, Mahfuzur Rahman, Md. Abu Zafor.

Accounts & Finance Unit: Rebeka Sultana (Director), Md. Shahidullah (Sr. Deputy Director), Tahera Begum, Philip Arnold, Ishtiaq Ahmed Tamanna Nasrin, Paymelia Saha, Masuma Parvin, Sadika Jinat Banu.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit: Fatema Mahmuda (Sr. Deputy Director), A M Rasheduzzaman Khan (Sr. Coordinator), Humaira Knanum (Monitoring Organizer).

ANNEX II

Sponsors of Working Children: 2014

SL. No.	Children Name	Name of Sponsor
1.	Rubel	ZafreenSattar
2.	Jannatul	Ad.Nahid Shams
3.	Lucky Akhter	Nina Goswami
4.	Hanif	Khairul Islam
5.	Sabina Akter Dolly	Patrizia Heidegger
6.	Suborna	Patrizia Heidegger
7.	Shahanaz Parveen Shilpi	Patrizia Heidegger
8.	Sajeda Akhter	Patrizia Heidegger
9.	Jakir Hossain	Patrizia Heidegger
10.	Shanta	Patrizia Heidegger
11.	BipashaRaniGosh	Mr.TariqAli
12.	PriyankaRani Gosh	Mr.TariqAli
13.	RumaRaniGosh	Mr.TariqAli
14.	SumaRaniGosh	Mr.TariqAli
15.	Sharif	Trade Vision
16.	Nasrin	Trade Vision
17.	Farzana	Trade Vision
18.	Khadiza	Trade Vision
19.	Nasrin Sultana Swarna	Trade Vision
20.	Shahanaj	Trade Vision
21.	Shathi Chowdary	Dia & Duncan Roger Hall
22.	Taniya Akter	Dia & Duncan Roger Hall
23.	Fahima	Dia & Duncan Roger Hall
24.	Al-Amin	Zahirul Islam
25.	Rehana	Zahirul Islam
26.	Shathi	Zahirul Islam
27.	Amir Hossain	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
28.	Rubina Akter	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
29.	Laboni	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
30.	Halim Mia	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
31.	Sajib Alom	Vivek Group, Mr. Xavier S. Biswas
32.	Fahima	Zahanara Mridha

ANNEX II

SL. No.	Children Name	Name of Sponsor
33.	Taniya	Zahanara Mridha
34.	Bristi	Zahanara Mridha
35.	Laboni	Zahanara Mridha
36.	Akhi	Zahanara Mridha
37.	Mahamuda	Zahanara Mridha
38.	Soniya	Asrafun Hossain
39.	Santa	S.Bag Community Member
40.	Alamtaz	Birgit Lundbak
41.	Smiriti	S.Bag Community Member
42.	Moti	Shaheed Enam

Notes: